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1853

S. T. Coleridge

Æt. 26.

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

EDITED BY

DERWENT AND SARA COLERIDGE.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

This volume was prepared for the press by my lamented sister, Mrs. H. N. Coleridge, and will have an additional interest to many readers as the last monument of her highly-gifted mind. At her earnest request, my name appears with hers on the title-page, but the assistance rendered by me has been, in fact, little more than mechanical. The preface, and the greater part of the notes, are her composition:—the selection and arrangement have been determined almost exclusively by her critical judgment, or from records in her possession. A few slight corrections and unimportant additions are all that have been found necessary, the first and last sheets not having had the benefit of her own revision.

DERWENT COLERIDGE.

St. Mark's College, Chelsea,
May, 1852.

PREFACE TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

As a chronological arrangement of Poetry in completed collections is now beginning to find general favour, pains have been taken to follow this method in the present Edition of S. T. Coleridge's Poetical Works, as far as circumstances permitted—that is to say, as far as the date of composition of each poem was ascertainable, and as far as the plan could be carried out without effacing the classes into which the Author had himself distributed his most important poetical publication, the "Sibylline Leaves," namely, POEMS OCCASIONED BY POLITICAL EVENTS, OR FEELINGS CONNECTED WITH THEM; LOVE POEMS; MEDITATIVE POEMS IN BLANK VERSE; ODES AND MISCELLANEOUS POEMS. On account of these impediments, together with the fact, that many a poem, such as it appears in its ultimate form, is the growth of different periods, the agreement with chronology in this Edition is approximative rather than perfect: yet in the majority of instances the date of each piece has been made out, and its place fixed accordingly.

In another point of view also, the Poems have been distributed with relation to time: they are thrown into three broad groups, representing, first the Youth,—secondly, the Early Manhood and Middle Life,—thirdly, the Declining Age of the Poet;* and it will be readily perceived that each division has its own distinct tone and colour, corresponding to the period of life in which it was composed. It has been suggested, indeed,† that Coleridge had four poetical epochs, more or less diversely characterised,—that there is a discernible difference betwixt the productions of his Early Manhood and of his Middle Age, the latter being distinguished from those of his Stowey life, which may be considered as his poetic prime, by a less buoyant spirit. Fire they have; but it is not the clear, bright, mounting fire of his earlier poetry, conceived and executed when "he and youth were housemates still." In the course of a very few years after three-and-twenty all his very finest poems were produced; his twenty-fifth year has been called his *annus mirabilis*. To be a "Prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth! a Miser's pensioner,"‡ is the lot of Man. In respect of poetry, Coleridge was a "Prodigal's favourite," more, perhaps, than ever Poet was before.

1. The Juvenile Poems (now called Poems written in Youth), so named by the Author himself when he had long ceased to be juvenile, were first published in 1796. The second edition, which appeared in May,

* S. T. Coleridge was born Oct. 21, 1772, and died July 25, 1834.

† See Supplement to the Second Edition of the *Biographia Literaria*, vol. ii., p. 417.

‡ Wordsworth's Poetical Works, vol. v., p. 294. *The Small Celandine.* See motto to the last section.

1797, omitted nineteen pieces of the previous publication, and added eleven new. The volume, says Mr. H. N. Coleridge, in a note to the *Biographia Literaria*, comprised poems by Lamb and Lloyd, and on the title-page was printed the prophetic aspiration :—"*Duplex nobis vinculum, et amicitiæ junctarumque Camœnarum, —quod utinam neque mors solvat; neque temporis longinquitas.*" *

In the London edition of 1803, fifty-two of the pieces, contained in the first and second, were again presented to the public, but, what is now difficult to account for, unaccompanied by many fine poems which were undoubtedly written by that time, but saw not the light till, in 1817, they formed a part of the "Sibylline Leaves," beside the "Ancient Mariner," "The Foster-Mother's Tale" (an off-shoot from "Remorse," then entitled "Osorio"), and "The Nightingale: a Conversation Poem," which entered the world along with the afterwards celebrated and ever immortal "Lyrical Ballads" of William Wordsworth. Only thirty-six of the Juvenile Poems were included in the collection of Coleridge's "Poetical and Dramatic Works," published by Mr. Pickering in 1828. These, all produced before the Author's twenty-fourth year, devoted as he was to the "soft strains" of Bowles, have more in common with the passionate lyrics of Collins and the picturesque wildness of the pretended Ossian, than with the well-tuned sentimentality of that Muse which the over-grateful poet has represented as his earliest inspirer. For the young they will ever retain a peculiar charm, because so fraught with the joyous spirit of youth; and in the minds of all

* *Biographia Literaria*, 2nd edit., vol. 1., p. 4.

readers that feeling which disposes men "to set the bud above the rose full-blown" would secure them an interest, even if their intrinsic beauty and sweetness were less adequate to obtain it.

2. Poems of Early Manhood are "The Ancient Mariner," "The Wanderings of Cain," "Kubla Khan," "Christabel," Part I. The "Sibylline Leaves" of 1817 comprises many minor poems of the same date as those just mentioned, and likewise another set, which must be referred to Middle Life, that collection extending from 1796 to the time of publication. The second part of "Christabel" we know, on the Poet's own authority, to have been composed in 1800; it therefore occupies an intermediate station between the two eras.

"Remorse" was first cast at Stowey, in 1797 or 8. Alvar's Soliloquy (Act v., Scene 1,) was published with the "Lyrical Ballads," in 1798, under the title of "The Dungeon." The translation of "Wallenstein" was made in the winter of 1800. "Zapolya," published in 1817, must have been composed somewhere between 1814 and 1816.*

3. Poems written in Later Life. The second edition of the "Sibylline Leaves" contained a certain number of short poems, quaintly designated "Prose in Rhyme, Moralities, Epigrams, and Poems without a Name." The whole of these, as late productions, are placed in the last section, and to them are added many other pieces, serious and sportive, which are known to have been the harvest of the latest season accorded to the Poet in this state of existence.

* See Dramatic Works.

The present Editors have been guided in the general arrangement of this edition by those of 1817 and 1828, which may be held to represent the author's matured judgment upon the larger and more important part of his poetical productions. They have reason, indeed, to believe, that the edition of 1828 was the last upon which he was able to bestow personal care and attention. That of 1834, the last year of his earthly sojourning, a period when his thoughts were wholly engrossed, so far as the decays of his frail outward part left them free for intellectual pursuits and speculations, by a grand scheme of Christian Philosophy, to the enunciation of which in a long projected work his chief thoughts and aspirations had for many years been directed, was arranged mainly, if not entirely, at the discretion of his earliest Editor, H. N. Coleridge, who, not to mention the boon he has conferred on the public in preserving so valuable a record of his Uncle's conversation as is contained in the Table Talk of S. T. Coleridge, performed his task in editing *The Friend*, *The Literary Remains*, *The Church and State* and *Lay Sermons*, and *The Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*, in a manner which must ever procure him sentiments of gratitude from all who prize the writings of Coleridge. Such alterations only have been made in this final arrangement of the Poetical Works of S. T. Coleridge, by those into whose charge they have devolved, as they feel assured, both the Author himself and his earliest Editor would at this time find to be either necessary or desirable. The observations and experience of eighteen years, a period long enough to bring about many changes in literary opinion, have satisfied them that the immature essays of boyhood and adolescence, not marked with any such prophetic note of

genius as certainly does belong to the four school-boy poems they have retained, tend to injure the general effect of a body of poetry. That a writer, especially a writer of verse, should keep out of sight his third-rate performances, is now become a maxim with critics; for they are not, at the worst, effectless: they have an effect, that of diluting and weakening, to the reader's feelings, the general power of the collection. Mr. Coleridge himself constantly, after 1796, rejected a certain portion of his earliest published *Juvenilia:* never printed any attempts of his boyhood, except those four with which the present publication commences; and there can be no doubt that his Editor of 1834 would ere now have come to the conclusion, that only such of the Author's early performances as were sealed by his own approval ought to form a permanent part of the body of his poetical works.

The "Allegoric Vision," as it cannot be considered poetry in the full sense of the word, and may be read with much more advantage in its proper place—the Introduction to the Author's second Lay Sermon,—the Editors have thought fit to withdraw from this collection. And a piece of extravagant humour, printed for the first time among the Author's works in 1834, rather it would appear with his acquiescence, than by his desire, has been excluded for the reasons assigned by the Author himself in the Apologetic Preface. "The Devil's Walk," having been reproduced with his full authority in the Edition of 1828, has been retained,—restored, however, as in the Edition of 1834, to its original form and completeness. To this extent a discretionary privilege has been exercised, for which, it is

believed, that little apology will be required by the public.*

It must be added, that time has robbed of their charm certain sportive effusions of Mr. C.'s later years, which were given to the public, in the first gloss and glow of novelty in 1834, and has proved that, though not devoid of the quality of genius, they possess, upon the whole, not more than an ephemeral interest. These the Editors have not scrupled to omit on the same grounds and in the same confidence that has been already explained.

Four short pieces only have been added, the third and ninth Sonnets (pages 41 and 45), from the edition of 1796, the "Day-Dream" (page 221), from the Appendix to Coleridge's "Essays on his own Times," and the "Hymn" (page 315), which is now printed for the first time

The Portrait has been engraved from a picture of S. T. Coleridge, at twenty-six years of age, which originally belonged to the poet's admirable friend, Thomas Poole, of Nether Stowey, by the kind permission of R. P. King, Esq., of Brislington, near Bath, its present owner. It is presented not as altogether satisfactory, but as the best and most interesting record of the Poet's youthful face that was to be obtained.

S. C.

Chester Place, Regent's Park.
March, 1852.

* This humorous piece first appeared in the *Morning Post*, when, according to the Editor of that Journal, it made so great a sensation that several hundred sheets extra were sold by them, as the paper was in request for days and weeks afterwards.

Ite hinc, Camœnæ! vos quoque ite, suaves
Dulces Camœnæ! Nam (fatebimur enim)
Dulces fuistis. Et tamen meas chartas
Revisitote, sed pudenter et raro.—VIRG., *Catal.* vii.

(*From the Preface to the Sibylline Leaves.*)

PREFACE.

Compositions resembling those of the present volume are not unfrequently condemned for their querulous egotism. But egotism is to be condemned then only when it offends against time and place, as in a history or an epic poem. To censure it in a monody or sonnet is almost as absurd as to dislike a circle for being round. Why then write Sonnets or Monodies? Because they give me pleasure when perhaps nothing else could. After the more violent emotions of sorrow, the mind demands amusement, and can find it in employment alone; but full of its late sufferings, it can endure no employment not in some measure connected with them. Forcibly to turn away our attention to general subjects is a painful and most often an unavailing effort.

> "But O! how grateful to a wounded heart
> The tale of misery to impart—
> From others' eyes bid artless sorrows flow,
> And raise esteem upon the base of woe!"
>
> SHAW.

The communicativeness of our nature leads us to describe our own sorrows; in the endeavour to describe them,

intellectual activity is exerted; and from intellectual activity there results a pleasure, which is gradually associated, and mingles as a corrective, with the painful subject of the description. "True!" (it may be answered) "but how is the Public interested in your sorrows or your description?" We are for ever attributing personal unities to imaginary aggregates. What is the Public, but a term for a number of scattered individuals? Of whom as many will be interested in these sorrows, as have experienced the same or similar.

"Holy be the lay
Which mourning soothes the mourner on his way."

If I could judge of others by myself, I should not hesitate to affirm, that the most interesting passages in all writings are those in which the author developes his own feelings? The sweet voice of Cona* never sounds so sweetly, as when it speaks of itself; and I should almost suspect that man of an unkindly heart, who could read the opening of the third book of the Paradise Lost without peculiar emotion. By a law of our nature, he, who labours under a strong feeling, is impelled to seek for sympathy; but a poet's feelings are all strong. Quicquid amet valde amat. Akenside therefore speaks with philosophical accuracy when he classes Love and Poetry, as producing the same effects:

"Love and the wish of Poets when their tongue
Would teach to others' bosoms, what so charms
Their own."

PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

* Ossian.

There is one species of egotism which is truly disgusting; not that which leads us to communicate our feelings to others, but that which would reduce the feelings of others to an identity with our own. The atheist, who exclaims, "pshaw!" when he glances his eye on the praises of Deity, is an egotist: an old man, when he speaks contemptuously of Love-verses, is an egotist: and the sleek favourites of fortune are egotists, when they condemn all "melancholy, discontented" verses. Surely, it would be candid not merely to ask whether the poem pleases ourselves, but to consider whether or no there may not be others, to whom it is well calculated to give an innocent pleasure.

I shall only add, that each of my readers will, I hope, remember, that these poems on various subjects, which he reads at one time and under the influence of one set of feelings, were written at different times and prompted by very different feelings; and therefore that the supposed inferiority of one poem to another may sometimes be owing to the temper of mind, in which he happens to peruse it.

My poems have been rightly charged with a profusion of double-epithets, and a general turgidness. I have pruned the double-epithets with no sparing hand; and used my best efforts to tame the swell and glitter both of thought and diction.* This latter fault how-

* Without any feeling of anger, I may yet be allowed to express some degree of surprise, that after having run the critical gauntlet for a certain class of faults, which I had, viz., a too ornate, and elaborately poetic diction, and nothing having come before the judgment-seat of the Reviewers during the

ever had insinuated itself into my "Religious Musings" with such intricacy of union, that sometimes I have omitted to disentangle the weed from the fear of snapping the flower. A third and heavier accusation has been brought against me, that of obscurity; but not, I think, with equal justice. An author is obscure, when his conceptions are dim and imperfect, and his language incorrect, or inappropriate, or involved. A poem that abounds in allusions, like the Bard of Gray, or one that impersonates high and abstract truths, like Collin's Ode on the poetical character, claims not to be popular—but should be acquitted of obscurity. The deficiency is in the reader. But this is a charge which every poet, whose imagination is warm and rapid, must expect from his contemporaries. Milton did not escape it; and it was adduced with virulence against Gray and Collins. We now hear no more of it: not that their poems are better understood at present, than they were at their first publication; but their fame is established; and a critic would accuse himself of frigidity or inattention, who should profess not to understand them. But a living writer is yet *sub judice;* and if we cannot follow his conceptions or enter into his feelings, it is more consoling to our pride to consider him as lost beneath, than as soaring above us. If any man expect from my poems the same easiness of style which he admires in a drinking-song, for him I have not written. Intelligibilia, non intellectum adfero.

long interval, I should for at least seventeen years, quarter after quarter, have been placed by them in the foremost rank of the proscribed, and made to abide the brunt of abuse and ridicule for faults directly opposite, viz., bald and prosaic language, and an affected simplicity both of matter and manner—faults which assuredly did not enter into the character of my compositions.

Literary Life, i. 51; *published* 1817.

I expect neither profit nor general fame by my writings; and I consider myself as having been amply repaid without either. Poetry has been to me its own "exceeding great reward:" it has soothed my afflictions; it has multiplied and refined my enjoyments; it has endeared solitude; and it has given me the habit of wishing to discover the Good and the Beautiful in all that meets and surrounds me.*

S. T. C.

* The above Preface was prefixed by the author to the third edition of the Juvenile Poems, in 1803, and transferred by him without alteration to the collected edition of his poetical works in 1828. It is made up from the Prefaces to the first two editions of his Poems, and referred, in the first instance, to the earlier productions of his Muse. In the Preface to the Sibylline Leaves, which he did not reprint, he states that that collection was "presented to the reader as perfect as the author's skill and powers could render them;" adding, that henceforward he must be occupied by studies of a very different kind." The motto which appears on a subsequent page is taken from the same place, and points to a similar conclusion.

D. C.

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POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

POEMS WRITTEN IN YOUTH.

FIRST ADVENT OF LOVE.*

O FAIR is Love's first hope to gentle mind!
As Eve's first star thro' fleecy cloudlet peeping;
And sweeter than the gentle south-west wind,
O'er willowy meads and shadowed waters creeping,
And Ceres' golden fields;—the sultry hind
Meets it with brow uplift, and stays his reaping.

1788.

GENEVIEVE.

MAID of my Love, sweet Genevieve!
In Beauty's light you glide along:
Your eye is like the star of eve,
And sweet your Voice, as Seraph's song.
Yet not your heavenly Beauty gives
This heart with passion soft to glow:
Within your soul a Voice there lives!
It bids you hear the tale of Woe.

* See Note at the end of the volume.

When sinking low the Sufferer wan
Beholds no hand outstretched to save,
Fair, as the bosom of the Swan
That rises graceful o'er the wave,
I've seen your breast with pity heave,
And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve!

THE RAVEN.

A CHRISTMAS TALE, TOLD BY A SCHOOL-BOY TO HIS LITTLE BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

Underneath an old oak tree
There was of swine a huge company,
That grunted as they crunched the mast:
For that was ripe, and fell full fast.
Then they trotted away, for the wind grew high:
One acorn they left, and no more might you spy.
Next came a Raven, that liked not such folly:
He belonged, they did say, to the witch Melancholy!
Blacker was he than blackest jet,
Flew low in the rain, and his feathers not wet.
He picked up the acorn and buried it straight
By the side of a river both deep and great.
Where then did the Raven go?
He went high and low,
Over hill, over dale, did the black Raven go.
Many Autumns, many Springs
Travelled he with wandering wings:
Many Summers, many Winters—
I can't tell half his adventures.

At length he came back, and with him a She,
And the acorn was grown to a tall oak tree.
They built them a nest in the topmost bough,
And young ones they had, and were happy enow.
But soon came a woodman in leathern guise,
His brow, like a pent-house, hung over his eyes.
He'd an axe in his hand, not a word he spoke,
But with many a hem! and a sturdy stroke,
At length he brought down the poor Raven's own oak.
His young ones were killed; for they could not depart,
And their mother did die of a broken heart.
The boughs from the trunk the Woodman did sever;
And they floated it down on the course of the river.
They sawed it in planks, and its bark they did strip,
And with this tree and others they made a good ship.
The ship, it was launched; but in sight of the land
Such a storm there did rise as no ship could withstand.
It bulged on a rock, and the waves rushed in fast:
Round and round flew the Raven, and cawed to the blast.
He heard the last shriek of the perishing souls—
See! See! o'er the topmast the mad water rolls!
Right glad was the Raven, and off he went fleet,
And Death riding home on a cloud he did meet,
And he thank'd him again and again for this treat:
They had taken his all, and Revenge it was sweet!

TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY.

AN ALLEGORY.

On the wide level of a mountain's head,
(I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,
Two lovely children run an endless race,
A sister and a brother!
That far outstripp'd the other;
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
And looks and listens for the boy behind:
For he, alas! is blind!
O'er rough and smooth with even step he pass'd,
And knows not whether he be first or last.

ABSENCE.

A FAREWELL ODE ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR JESUS COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Where graced with many a classic spoil
Cam rolls his reverend stream along,
I haste to urge the learned toil
That sternly chides my love-lorn song:
Ah me! too mindful of the days
Illumed by Passion's orient rays,
When Peace, and Cheerfulness, and Health
Enriched me with the best of wealth,

Ah fair Delights! that o'er my soul
On Memory's wing, like shadows, fly!
Ah Flowers! which Joy from Eden stole
While Innocence stood smiling by!—
But cease, fond Heart! this bootless moan:
Those Hours on rapid Pinions flown
Shall yet return, by Absence crowned,
And scatter livelier roses round.
The Sun who ne'er remits his fires
On heedless eyes may pour the day:
The Moon, that oft from Heaven retires,
Endears her renovated ray.
What though she leave the sky unblest
To mourn awhile in murky vest?
When she relumes her lovely Light,
We bless the Wanderer of the Night.

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

Ere Sin could blight or Sorrow fade,
Death came with friendly care;
The opening bud to Heaven conveyed,
And bade it blossom there.

SONGS OF THE PIXIES.

The Pixies, in the superstition of Devonshire, are a race of beings invisibly small, and harmless or friendly to man. At a small distance from a village in that county, half way up a wood-covered hill, is an excavation called the Pixies' Parlour. The roots of old trees form its ceiling; and on its sides are innumerable cyphers, among which the Author discovered his own, and those of his brothers, cut by the hand of their childhood. At the foot of the hill flows the river Otter.

To this place the Author, during the summer months of the year 1793, conducted a party of young ladies; one of whom, of stature elegantly small, and of complexion colourless yet clear, was proclaimed the Faery Queen. On which occasion the following Irregular Ode was written.

I.

Whom the untaught Shepherds call
  Pixies in their madrigal,
Fancy's children, here we dwell:
  Welcome, Ladies! to our cell.
Here the wren of softest note
  Builds its nest and warbles well;
Here the blackbird strains his throat;
  Welcome, Ladies! to our cell.

II.

When fades the moon to shadowy-pale,
And scuds the cloud before the gale,
Ere the Morn, all gem-bedight,
Hath streak'd the East with rosy light,
We sip the furze-flower's fragrant dews
Clad in robes of rainbow hues:
Or sport amid the shooting gleams
To the tune of distant-tinkling teams,

While lusty Labour scouting sorrow
Bids the Dame a glad good-morrow,
Who jogs the accustomed road along,
And paces cheery to her cheering song.

III.

But not our filmy pinion
We scorch amid the blaze of day,
When Noontide's fiery-tresséd minion
Flashes the fervid ray.
Aye from the sultry heat
We to the cave retreat
O'ercanopied by huge roots intertwined
With wildest texture, blackened o'er with age:
Round them their mantle green the ivies bind,
Beneath whose foliage pale
Fanned by the unfrequent gale
We shield us from the Tyrant's mid-day rage.

IV.

Thither, while the murmuring throng
Of wild-bees hum their drowsy song,
By Indolence and Fancy brought,
A youthful Bard, "unknown to Fame,"
Wooes the Queen of Solemn Thought,
And heaves the gentle misery of a sigh
Gazing with tearful eye,
As round our sandy grot appear
Many a rudely sculptured name
To pensive Memory dear!
Weaving gay dreams of sunny-tinctured hue
We glance before his view:

O'er his hush'd soul our soothing witcheries shed
And twine the future garland round his head.

V.

When Evening's dusky car
Crowned with her dewy star
Steals o'er the fading sky in shadowy flight;
On leaves of aspen trees
We tremble to the breeze
Veiled from the grosser ken of mortal sight.
Or, haply, at the visionary hour,
Along our wildly-bowered sequestered walk,
We listen to the enamoured rustic's talk;
Heave with the heavings of the maiden's breast,
Where young-eyed Loves have hid their turtle nest;
Or guide of soul-subduing power
The glance, that from the half-confessing eye
Darts the fond question or the soft reply.

VI.

Or through the mystic ringlets of the vale
We flash our faery feet in gamesome prank:
Or, silent-sandaled, pay our defter court,
Circling the Spirit of the Western Gale,
Where wearied with his flower-caressing sport,
Supine he slumbers on a violet bank;
Then with quaint music hymn the parting gleam
By lonely Otter's sleep-persuading stream;
Or where his wave with loud unquiet song
Dashed o'er the rocky channel froths along;
Or where, his silver waters smoothed to rest,
The tall tree's shadow sleeps upon his breast.

VII.

Hence, thou lingerer, Light!
Eve saddens into Night.
Mother of wildly-working dreams! we view
The sombre hours, that round thee stand
With down-cast eyes (a duteous band)!
Their dark robes dripping with the heavy dew.
Sorceress of the ebon throne!
Thy power the Pixies own,
When round thy raven brow
Heaven's lucent roses glow,
And clouds in watery colours drest
Float in light drapery o'er thy sable vest:
What time the pale moon sheds a softer day
Mellowing the woods beneath its pensive beam:
For 'mid the quivering light 'tis ours to play,
Aye dancing to the cadence of the stream.

VIII.

Welcome Ladies! to the cell
Where the blameless Pixies dwell:
But thou, sweet Nymph! proclaimed our Faery Queen,
With what obeisance meet
Thy presence shall we greet?
For lo! attendant on thy steps are seen
Graceful Ease in artless stole,
And white-robed Purity of soul,
With Honour's softer mien;
Mirth of the loosely-flowing hair,
And meek-eyed Pity eloquently fair,
Whose tearful cheeks are lovely to the view,
As snow-drop wet with dew.

Unboastful Maid! though now the Lily pale
  Transparent grace thy beauties meek;
Yet ere again along the impurpling vale,
The purpling vale and elfin-haunted grove,
Young Zephyr his fresh flowers profusely throws,
  We'll tinge with livelier hues thy cheek;
And, haply, from the nectar-breathing Rose
    Extract a Blush for Love!

1793.

THE ROSE.

As late each flower that sweetest blows
I plucked, the Garden's pride!
Within the petals of a Rose
A sleeping Love I spied.

Around his brows a beamy wreath
Of many a lucent hue;
All purple glowed his cheek, beneath,
Inebriate with dew.

I softly seized the unguarded Power,
Nor scared his balmy rest:
And placed him, caged within the flower,
On spotless Sara's breast.

But when unweeting of the guile
Awoke the prisoner sweet,
He struggled to escape awhile
And stamped his faery feet.

Ah! soon the soul-entrancing sight
Subdued the impatient boy!
He gazed! he thrilled with deep delight!
Then clapped his wings for joy.

"And O!" he cried—"of magic kind
What charms this Throne endear!
Some other Love let Venus find—
I'll fix my empire here."

1793.

KISSES.*

Cupid, if storying Legends tell aright,
Once framed a rich Elixir of Delight.
A Chalice o'er love-kindled flames he fixed,
And in it Nectar and Ambrosia mixed:
With these the magic dews, which Evening brings,
Brushed from the Idalian star by faery wings:
Each tender pledge of sacred Faith he joined,
Each gentler Pleasure of the unspotted mind—
Day-dreams, whose tints with sportive brightness glow,
And Hope, the blameless Parasite of Woe.
The eyeless Chemist heard the process rise,
The steamy Chalice bubbled up in sighs;
Sweet sounds transpired, as when the enamoured Dove
Pours the soft murmuring of responsive Love.
The finished work might Envy vainly blame,
And "Kisses" was the precious Compound's name.
With half the God his Cyprian Mother blest,
And breathed on Sara's lovelier lips the rest.

July, 1793.

* See Note.

TO SARA.

One kiss, dear maid! I said and sighed—
Your scorn the little boon denied.
Ah why refuse the blameless bliss?
Can danger lurk within a kiss?
Yon viewless Wanderer of the vale,
The Spirit of the Western Gale,
At Morning's break, at Evening's close,
Inhales the sweetness of the Rose,
And hovers o'er the uninjured Bloom
Sighing back the soft perfume.
Vigour to the Zephyr's wing
Her nectar-breathing Kisses fling:
And He the glitter of the Dew
Scatters on the Rose's hue.
Bashful lo! she bends her head,
And darts a blush of deeper Red!
Too well those lovely lips disclose
The triumphs of the opening Rose;
O fair! O graceful! bid them prove
As passive to the breath of Love.
In tender accents, faint and low,
Well-pleased I hear the whispered "No!"
The whispered "No"—how little meant!
Sweet Falsehood that endears Consent!
For on those lovely lips the while
Dawns the soft relenting smile,
And tempts with feigned dissuasion coy
The gentle violence of Joy.

THE SIGH.

When Youth his faery reign began
Ere sorrow had proclaimed me man;
While Peace the present hour beguiled,
And all the lovely Prospect smiled;
Then Mary! 'mid my lightsome glee
I heaved the painless Sigh for thee.

And when, along the waves of woe,
My harassed Heart was doomed to know
The frantic burst of Outrage keen,
And the slow Pang that gnaws unseen;
Then shipwrecked on Life's stormy sea
I heaved an anguished Sigh for thee!

But soon Reflection's power imprest
A stiller sadness on my breast;
And sickly Hope with waning eye
Was well content to droop and die:
I yielded to the stern decree,
Yet heaved a languid Sigh for thee!

And though in distant climes to roam,
A wanderer from my native home,
I fain would soothe the sense of Care,
And lull to sleep the Joys that were,
Thy Image may not banished be—
Still, Mary! still I sigh for thee.

June, 1794.

LINES

TO A BEAUTIFUL SPRING IN A VILLAGE.

ONCE more, sweet Stream! with slow foot wandering near,
I bless thy milky waters cold and clear.
Escaped the flashing of the noontide hours,
With one fresh garland of Pierian flowers,
(Ere from thy zephyr-haunted brink I turn,)
My languid hand shall wreathe thy mossy urn.
For not through pathless grove with murmur rude
Thou soothest the sad wood-nymph, Solitude;
Nor thine unseen in cavern depths to well,
The hermit-fountain of some dripping cell!
Pride of the Vale! thy useful streams supply
The scattered cots and peaceful hamlet nigh.
The elfin tribe around thy friendly banks
With infant uproar and soul-soothing pranks,
Released from school, their little hearts at rest,
Launch paper navies on thy waveless breast.
The rustic here at eve with pensive look
Whistling lorn ditties leans upon his crook,
Or starting pauses with hope-mingled dread
To list the much-loved maid's accustomed tread:
She, vainly mindful of her dame's command,
Loiters, the long-filled pitcher in her hand.

Unboastful Stream! thy fount with pebbled falls
The faded form of past delight recalls,
What time the morning sun of Hope arose,
And all was joy; save when another's woes

A transient gloom upon my soul imprest,
Like passing clouds impictured on thy breast.
Life's current then ran sparkling to the noon,
Or silvery stole beneath the pensive Moon:
Ah! now it works rude brakes and thorns among,
Or o'er the rough rock bursts and foams along!

LINES ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING.*

O THOU wild Fancy, check thy wing! No more
Those thin white flakes, those purple clouds explore!
Nor there with happy spirits speed thy flight
Bathed in rich amber-glowing floods of light;
Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends the day,
With western peasants hail the morning ray!
Ah! rather bid the perished pleasures move,
A shadowy train, across the soul of Love!
O'er Disappointment's wintry desert fling
Each flower that wreathed the dewy locks of Spring,
When blushing, like a bride, from Hope's trim bower
She leapt, awakened by the pattering shower.
Now sheds the sinking Sun a deeper gleam,
Aid, lovely Sorceress! aid thy Poet's dream!
With faery wand O bid the Maid arise,
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes:
As erst when from the Muses' calm abode
I came, with Learning's meed not unbestowed;
When as she twined a laurel round my brow,
And met my kiss, and half returned my vow,

* See Note.

O'er all my fame shot rapid my thrilled heart,
And every nerve confessed the electric dart.

O dear Deceit! I see the maiden rise,
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes,
When first the lark high soaring swells his throat,
Mocks the tired eye, and scatters the loud note,
I trace her footsteps on the accustomed lawn,
I mark her glancing 'mid the gleams of dawn.
When the bent flower beneath the night dew weeps
And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps,
Amid the paly radiance soft and sad,
She meets my lonely path in moon-beams clad.
With her along the streamlet's brink I rove;
With her I list the warblings of the grove;
And seems in each low wind her voice to float,
Lone whispering Pity in each soothing note!

Spirits of Love! ye heard her name! Obey
The powerful spell, and to my haunt repair.
Whether on clustering pinions ye are there,
Where rich snows blossom on the Myrtle trees,
Or with fond languishment around my fair
Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair;
O heed the spell, and hither wing your way,
Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze!

Spirits! to you the infant Maid was given
Formed by the wondrous Alchemy of Heaven!
No fairer Maid does Love's wide empire know,
No fairer Maid e'er heaved the bosom's snow.
A thousand Loves around her forehead fly;
A thousand Loves sit melting in her eye;

Love lights her smile—in Joy's red nectar dips
His myrtle flower, and plants it on her lips.
She speaks! and hark that passion-warbled song—
Still, Fancy! still that voice, those notes prolong.
As sweet as when that voice with rapturous falls
Shall wake the softened echoes of Heaven's Halls!

O (have I sighed) were mine the wizard's rod,
Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful God!
A flower-entangled Arbour I would seem
To shield my Love from Noontide's sultry beam:
Or bloom a Myrtle, from whose odorous boughs
My Love might weave gay garlands for her brows.
When Twilight stole across the fading vale,
To fan my Love I'd be the Evening Gale,
Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling vest,
And flutter my faint pinions on her breast!
On Seraph wing I'd float a Dream by night,
To soothe my Love with shadows of delight:
Or soar aloft to be the Spangled Skies,
And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes!

As when the savage, who his drowsy frame
Had basked beneath the Sun's unclouded flame,
Awakes amid the troubles of the air,
The skiey deluge, and white lightning's glare—
Aghast he scours before the tempest's sweep,
And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep:—
So tossed by storms along Life's wildering way,
Mine eye reverted views that cloudless day,
When by my native brook I wont to rove,
While Hope with kisses nursed the Infant Love.

Dear native brook! like Peace, so placidly
Smoothing through fertile fields thy current meek!
Dear native brook! where first young Poesy
Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream!
Where blameless pleasures dimple Quiet's cheek,
As water-lilies ripple thy slow stream!
Dear native haunts! where Virtue still is gay,
Where Friendship's fixed star sheds a mellowed ray
Where Love a crown of thornless Roses wears,
Where softened Sorrow smiles within her tears;
And Memory, with a Vestal's chaste employ,
Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of joy!
No more your sky-larks melting from the sight
Shall thrill the attuned heart-string with delight—
No more shall deck your pensive Pleasures sweet
With wreaths of sober hue my evening seat.
Yet dear to Fancy's eye your varied scene
Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook between!
Yet sweet to Fancy's ear the warbled song,
That soars on Morning's wing your vales among!

Scenes of my Hope! the aching eye ye leave
Like yon bright hues that paint the clouds of eve!
Tearful and saddening with the saddened blaze
Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful gaze:
Sees shades on shades with deeper tint impend,
Till chill and damp the moonless night descend.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

WITH A POEM ON THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

MUCH on my early youth I love to dwell,
Ere yet I bade that friendly dome farewell,
Where first, beneath the echoing cloisters pale,
I heard of guilt and wondered at the tale!
Yet though the hours flew by on careless wing,
Full heavily of Sorrow would I sing.
Aye as the star of evening flung its beam
In broken radiance on the wavy stream,
My soul amid the pensive twilight gloom
Mourned with the breeze, O Lee Boo!* o'er thy tomb.
Where'er I wandered, Pity still was near,
Breathed from the heart and glistened in the tear:
No knell that tolled, but filled my anxious eye,
And suffering Nature wept that one should die! †

Thus to sad sympathies I soothed my breast,
Calm, as the rainbow in the weeping West:
When slumbering Freedom roused by high Disdain
With giant fury burst her triple chain!
Fierce on her front the blasting Dog-star glowed;
Her banners, like a midnight meteor, flowed;
Amid the yelling of the storm-rent skies
She came, and scattered battles from her eyes!

* Lee Boo, the son of Abba Thule, Prince of the Pelew Islands, came over to England with Captain Wilson, died of the small-pox, and is buried in Rotherhithe church-yard. See Keate's Account.

† Southey's Retrospect.

Then Exultation waked the patriot fire
And swept with wild hand the Tyrtæan lyre:
Red from the Tyrant's wound I shook the lance,
And strode in joy the reeking plains of France!

Fallen is the oppressor, friendless, ghastly, low,
And my heart aches, though Mercy struck the blow.
With wearied thought once more I seek the shade,
Where peaceful Virtue weaves the myrtle braid.
And O! if Eyes whose holy glances roll,
Swift messengers, and eloquent of soul;
If Smiles more winning, and a gentler Mien
Than the love-wildered Maniac's brain hath seen
Shaping celestial forms in vacant air,
If these demand the impassioned Poet's care—
If Mirth and softened Sense and Wit refined,
The blameless features of a lovely mind;
Then haply shall my trembling hand assign
No fading wreath to Beauty's saintly shrine.
Nor, Sara! thou these early flowers refuse—
Ne'er lurked the snake beneath their simple hues;
No purple bloom the Child of Nature brings
From Flattery's night-shade: as he feels he sings.

September, 1792.

IMITATED FROM OSSIAN.

The stream with languid murmur creeps,
In Lumin's flowery vale:
Beneath the dew the Lily weeps
Slow-waving to the gale.

"Cease, restless gale!" it seems to say,
"Nor wake me with thy sighing!
The honours of my vernal day
On rapid wing are flying.

"To-morrow shall the Traveller come
Who late beheld me blooming:
His searching eye shall vainly roam
The dreary vale of Lumin."

With eager gaze and wetted cheek
My wonted haunts along,
Thus, faithful Maiden! thou shalt seek
The Youth of simplest song.

But I along the breeze shall roll
The voice of feeble power;
And dwell, the Moon-beam of thy soul,
In Slumber's nightly hour.

1794.

THE COMPLAINT OF NINATHOMA.

How long will ye round me be swelling,
O ye blue-tumbling waves of the sea?
Not always in caves was my dwelling,
Nor beneath the cold blast of the tree.

Through the high-sounding halls of Cathlóma
In the steps of my beauty I strayed;
The warriors beheld Ninathóma,
And they blessed the white-bosomed Maid!

A Ghost! by my cavern it darted!
In moon-beams the Spirit was drest—
For lovely appear the departed
When they visit the dreams of my rest!

But disturbed by the tempest's commotion
Fleet the shadowy forms of delight—
Ah cease, thou shrill blast of the Ocean!
To howl through my cavern by night.

TO A YOUNG ASS.

ITS MOTHER BEING TETHERED NEAR IT.

Poor little Foal of an oppressed Race!
I love the languid Patience of thy face:
And oft with gentle hand I give thee bread,
And clap thy ragged Coat, and pat thy head.
But what thy dulled Spirits hath dismayed,
That never thou dost sport along the glade?
And (most unlike the nature of things young)
That earthward still thy moveless head is hung?
Do thy prophetic Fears anticipate,
Meek Child of Misery! thy future fate?
The starving meal, and all the thousand aches
"Which patient Merit of the Unworthy takes?"
Or is thy sad heart thrilled with filial pain
To see thy wretched Mother's shortened Chain?
And, truly very piteous is her Lot—
Chained to a Log within a narrow spot,
Where the close-eaten Grass is scarcely seen,
While sweet around her waves the tempting Green.
Poor Ass! thy master should have learnt to show
Pity—best taught by fellowship of Woe!
For much I fear me that He lives like thee,
Half famished in a land of Luxury!
How askingly its footsteps hither bend,
It seems to say, "And have I then one Friend?"
Innocent Foal! thou poor despised Forlorn!
I hail thee Brother—spite of the fool's scorn!

And fain would take thee with me, in the Dell
Of Peace and mild Equality to dwell,
Where Toil shall call the charmer Health his bride,
And Laughter tickle Plenty's ribless side!
How thou wouldst toss thy heels in gamesome play,
And frisk about, as lamb or kitten gay!
Yea! and more musically sweet to me
Thy dissonant harsh bray of joy would be,
Than warbled melodies that soothe to rest
The aching of pale Fashion's vacant breast!

December, 1794.

TO AN INFANT.

Ah! cease thy tears and sobs, my little Life!
I did but snatch away the unclasped knife:
Some safer toy will soon arrest thine eye,
And to quick laughter change this peevish cry!
Poor stumbler on the rocky coast of woe,
Tutored by pain each source of pain to know!
Alike the foodful fruit and scorching fire
Awake thy eager grasp and young desire;
Alike the Good, the Ill offend thy sight,
And rouse the stormy sense of shrill affright!
Untaught, yet wise! 'mid all thy brief alarms
Thou closely clingest to thy Mother's arms,
Nestling thy little face in that fond breast
Whose anxious heavings lull thee to thy rest!
Man's breathing Miniature! thou mak'st me sigh—
A Babe art thou—and such a Thing am I!

To anger rapid and as soon appeased,
For trifles mourning and by trifles pleased,
Break Friendship's mirror with a tetchy blow,
Yet snatch what coals of fire on Pleasure's altar glow!

O thou that rearest with celestial aim
The future Seraph in my mortal frame,
Thrice holy Faith! whatever thorns I meet,
As on I totter with unpractised feet,
Still let me stretch my arms and cling to thee,
Meek nurse of souls through their long infancy!

IMITATED FROM THE WELSH.

If, while my passion I impart,
You deem my words untrue,
O place your hand upon my heart—
Feel how it throbs for you.

Ah no! reject the thoughtless claim
In pity to your Lover!
That thrilling touch would aid the flame,
It wishes to discover.

DOMESTIC PEACE.

Tell me, on what holy ground
May Domestic Peace be found—
Halcyon Daughter of the skies!
Far on fearful wings she flies,
From the pomp of sceptered State,
From the Rebel's noisy hate,
In a cottaged vale She dwells
Listening to the Sabbath bells!
Still around her steps are seen
Spotless Honour's meeker mien,
Love, the sire of pleasing fears,
Sorrow smiling through her tears,
And conscious of the past employ
Memory, bosom-spring of joy.

1794.

LINES

WRITTEN AT THE KING'S ARMS, ROSS, FORMERLY THE HOUSE OF THE "MAN OF ROSS."

Richer than Miser o'er his countless hoards,
Nobler than Kings, or king-polluted Lords,
Here dwelt the Man of Ross! O Traveller, hear!
Departed Merit claims a reverent tear.
Friend to the friendless, to the sick man health,
With generous joy he viewed his modest wealth;

He heard the widow's heaven-breathed prayer of praise,
He marked the sheltered orphan's tearful gaze,
Or where the sorrow-shrivelled captive lay,
Poured the bright blaze of Freedom's noon-tide ray.
Beneath this roof if thy cheered moments pass,
Fill to the good man's name one grateful glass:
To higher zest shall Memory wake thy soul,
And Virtue mingle in the ennobled bowl.
But if, like me, through life's distressful scene
Lonely and sad thy pilgrimage hath been;
And if thy breast with heart-sick anguish fraught,
Thou journeyest onward tempest-tossed in thought;
Here cheat thy cares! in generous visions melt,
And dream of Goodness, thou hast never felt!

TO A FRIEND,

TOGETHER WITH AN UNFINISHED POEM.

Thus far my scanty brain hath built the rhyme
Elaborate and swelling; yet the heart
Not owns it. From thy spirit-breathing powers
I ask not now, my Friend! the aiding verse,
Tedious to thee, and from thy anxious thought
Of dissonant mood. In fancy (well I know)
From business wandering far and local cares,
Thou creepest round a dear-loved Sister's bed
With noiseless step, and watchest the faint look,
Soothing each pang with fond solicitude,
And tenderest tones medicinal of love.
I too a Sister had, an only Sister—

She loved me dearly, and I doted on her!
To her I poured forth all my puny sorrows
(As a sick Patient in his Nurse's arms)
And of the heart those hidden maladies
That shrink ashamed from even Friendship's eye.
O! I have woke at midnight, and have wept,
Because she was not!—Cheerily, dear Charles!
Thou thy best friend shalt cherish many a year;
Such warm presages feel I of high Hope.
For not uninterested the dear maid
I've viewed—her soul affectionate yet wise,
Her polished wit as mild as lambent glories
That play around a sainted infant's head.
(He knows, the Spirit that in secret sees,
Of whose omniscient and all-spreading Love
Aught to implore were impotence of mind)*
That my mute thoughts are sad before His throne,
Prepared, when He his healing ray vouchsafes,
To pour forth thanksgiving with lifted heart,
And praise Him Gracious with a Brother's joy!

December, 1794.

* I utterly recant the sentiment contained in the lines—

> Of whose omniscient and all-spreading Love
> Aught to *implore* were impotence of mind,

it being written in Scripture, "*Ask*, and it shall be given you;" and my human reason being, moreover, convinced of the propriety of offering petitions as well as thanksgivings to Deity.—S. T. C., 1797.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

Sister of love-lorn Poets, Philomel!
How many Bards in city garret pent,
While at their window they with downward eye
Mark the faint Lamp-beam on the kennelled mud,
And listen to the drowsy cry of Watchmen,
(Those hoarse unfeathered Nightingales of Time!)
How many wretched Bards address *thy* name,
And Her's, the full-orbed Queen, that shines above.
But I *do* hear thee, and the high bough mark,
Within whose mild moon-mellowed foliage hid
Thou warblest sad thy pity-pleading strains.
O! I have listened, till my working soul,
Waked by those strains to thousand phantasies,
Absorbed hath ceased to listen! Therefore oft
I hymn thy name; and with a proud delight
Oft will I tell thee, Minstrel of the Moon!
"Most musical, most melancholy" Bird!
That all thy soft diversities of tone,
Tho' sweeter far than the delicious airs
That vibrate from a white-armed Lady's harp,
What time the languishment of lonely love
Melts in her eye, and heaves her breast of snow,
Are not so sweet, as is the voice of her,
My Sara,—best beloved of human kind!
When breathing the pure soul of Tenderness
She thrills me with the Husband's promised name!

1794.

LINES ON A FRIEND

WHO DIED OF A FRENZY FEVER INDUCED BY CALUMNIOUS REPORTS.

Edmund! thy grave with aching eye I scan,
And inly groan for Heaven's poor outcast—Man!
'Tis tempest all or gloom: in early youth
If gifted with the Ithuriel lance of Truth
We force to start amid her feigned caress
Vice, siren-hag! in native ugliness;
A Brother's fate will haply rouse the tear,
And on we go in heaviness and fear!
But if our fond hearts call to pleasure's bower
Some pigmy Folly in a careless hour,
The faithless guest shall stamp the enchanted ground,
And mingled forms of Misery rise around:
Heart-fretting Fear, with pallid look aghast,
That courts the future woe to hide the past;
Remorse, the poisoned arrow in his side,
And loud lewd Mirth, to Anguish close allied;
Till Frenzy, fierce-eyed child of moping pain,
Darts her hot lightning-flash athwart the brain.
Rest, injured shade! Shall Slander squatting near
Spit her cold venom in a dead Man's ear?
'Twas thine to feel the sympathetic glow
In Merit's joy, and Poverty's meek woe;
Thine all, that cheer the moment as it flies,
The zoneless Cares, and smiling Courtesies.
Nursed in thy heart the firmer Virtues grew,
And in thy heart they withered! Such chill dew

Wan Indolence on each young blossom shed;
And Vanity her filmy net-work spread
With eye that rolled around in asking gaze,
And tongue that trafficked in the trade of praise.
Thy follies such! the hard world marked them well!
Were they more wise, the proud who never fell?
Rest, injured Shade! the poor man's grateful prayer
On heaven-ward wing thy wounded soul shall bear.
As oft at twilight gloom thy grave I pass,
And sit me down upon its recent grass,
With introverted eye I contemplate
Similitude of soul, perhaps of—fate;
To me hath heaven with bounteous hand assigned
Energic Reason and a shaping mind,
The daring ken of Truth, the Patriot's part,
And Pity's sigh, that breathes the gentle heart.
Sloth-jaundiced all! and from my graspless hand
Drop Friendship's precious pearls, like hour-glass sand.
I weep, yet stoop not! the faint anguish flows,
A dreamy pang in Morning's feverish doze.

Is this piled earth our Being's passless mound?
Tell me, cold grave! is death with poppies crowned?
Tired Sentinel! 'Mid fitful starts I nod,
And fain would sleep, though pillowed on a clod!

November, 1794.

MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON.*

O WHAT a wonder seems the fear of death,
Seeing how gladly we all sink to sleep,
Babes, Children, Youths, and Men,
Night following night for threescore years and ten!
But doubly strange, where life is but a breath
To sigh and pant with, up Want's rugged steep.

Away, Grim Phantom! Scorpion King, away!
Reserve thy terrors and thy stings display
For coward Wealth and Guilt in robes of State!
Lo! by the grave I stand of one, for whom
A prodigal Nature and a niggard Doom
(That all bestowing, this withholding all,)
Made each chance knell from distant spire or dome
Sound like a seeking Mother's anxious call,
Return, poor Child! Home, weary Truant, home!

Thee, Chatterton! these unblest stones protect
From want, and the bleak freezings of neglect.
Too long before the vexing Storm-blast driven
Here hast thou found repose! beneath this sod!
Thou! O vain word! thou dwell'st not with the clod!
Amid the shining Host of the Forgiven
Thou at the throne of Mercy and thy God
The triumph of redeeming Love dost hymn
(Believe it, O my soul!) to harps of Seraphim.

* See Note.

Yet oft, perforce, ('tis suffering Nature's call)
I weep, that heaven-born Genius so should fall;
And oft, in Fancy's saddest hour, my soul
Averted shudders at the poisoned bowl.
Now groans my sickening heart, as still I view
Thy corse of livid hue;
Now indignation checks the feeble sigh,
Or flashes through the tear that glistens in mine eye!

Is this the land of song-ennobled line?
Is this the land, where Genius ne'er in vain
Poured forth his lofty strain?
Ah me! yet Spenser, gentlest bard divine,
Beneath chill Disappointment's shade,
His weary limbs in lonely anguish laid;
And o'er her darling dead
Pity hopeless hung her head,
While "mid the pelting of that merciless storm,"
Sunk to the cold earth Otway's famished form!

Sublime of thought, and confident of fame,
From vales where Avon winds the Minstrel* came.
Light-hearted youth! aye, as he hastes along,
He meditates the future song,
How dauntless Ælla fray'd the Dacyan foe;
And while the numbers flowing strong
In eddies whirl, in surges throng,
Exulting in the spirits' genial throe
In tides of power his life-blood seems to flow.

And now his cheeks with deeper ardours flame,
His eyes have glorious meanings, that declare

* Avon, a river near Bristol, the birth-place of Chatterton.

More than the light of outward day shines there,
A holier triumph and a sterner aim!
Wings grow within him, and he soars above
Or Bard's or Minstrel's lay of war or love.
Friend to the friendless, to the Sufferer health,
He hears the widow's prayer, the good man's praise;
To scenes of bliss transmutes his fancied wealth,
And young and old shall now see happy days.
On many a waste he bids trim Gardens rise,
Gives the blue sky to many a prisoner's eyes;
And now in wrath he grasps the patriot steel,
And her own iron rod he makes Oppression feel.

Sweet Flower of Hope! free Nature's genial child!
That didst so fair disclose thy early bloom,
Filling the wide air with a rich perfume!
For thee in vain all heavenly aspects smiled;
From the hard world brief respite could they win—
The frost nipped sharp without, the canker preyed within!
Ah! where are fled the charms of vernal Grace,
And Joy's wild gleams that lightened o'er thy face?
Youth of tumultuous soul, and haggard eye!
Thy wasted form, thy hurried steps I view,
On thy wan forehead starts the lethal dew,
And oh! the anguish of that shuddering sigh!

Such were the struggles of the gloomy hour,
When Care, of withered brow,
Prepared the poison's death-cold power:
Already to thy lips was raised the bowl,
When near thee stood Affection meek
(Her bosom bare, and wildly pale her cheek)

Thy sullen gaze she bade thee roll
On scenes that well might melt thy soul;
Thy native cot she flashed upon thy view,
Thy native cot, where still, at close of day.
Peace smiling sate, and listened to thy lay;
Thy Sister's shrieks she bade thee hear,
And mark thy Mother's thrilling tear;
See, see her breast's convulsive throe,
Her silent agony of woe!
Ah! dash the poisoned chalice from thy hand!

And thou had'st dashed it, at her soft command,
But that Despair and Indignation rose,
And told again the story of thy woes;
Told the keen insult of the unfeeling heart;
The dread dependence on the low-born mind:
Told every pang, with which thy soul must smart,
Neglect, and grinning Scorn, and Want combined!
Recoiling quick, thou bad'st the friend of pain
Roll the black tide of Death through every freezing vein!

O Spirit blest!
Whether the Eternal's throne around,
Amidst the blaze of Seraphim,
Thou pourest forth the grateful hymn;
Or soaring thro' the blest domain
Enrapturest Angels with thy strain,—
Grant me, like thee, the lyre to sound,
Like thee with fire divine to glow;—
But ah! when rage the waves of woe,
Grant me with firmer breast to meet their hate,
And soar beyond the storm with upright eye elate!

Ye woods! that wave o'er Avon's rocky steep,
To Fancy's ear sweet is your murmuring deep,
For here she loves the cypress wreath to weave
Watching, with wistful eye, the saddening tints of eve.
Here, far from men, amid this pathless grove,
In solemn thought the Minstrel wont to rove,
Like star-beam on the slow sequestered tide
Lone-glittering, thro' the high tree branching wide.

And here, in Inspiration's eager hour,
When most the big soul feels the mastering power,
These wilds, these caverns roaming o'er,
Round which the screaming sea-gulls soar,
With wild unequal steps he passed along,
Oft pouring on the winds a broken song:
Anon, upon some rough rock's fearful brow
Would pause abrupt—and gaze upon the waves below.

Poor Chatterton! he sorrows for thy fate
Who would have praised and loved thee, ere too late.
Poor Chatterton! farewell! of darkest hues
This chaplet cast I on thy unshaped tomb;
But dare no longer on the sad theme muse,
Lest kindred woes persuade a kindred doom:
For oh! big gall-drops, shook from Folly's wing,
Have blackened the fair promise of my spring:
And the stern Fate transpierced with viewless dart
The last pale Hope that shivered at my heart!

Hence, gloomy thoughts! no more my soul shall dwell
On joys that were! No more endure to weigh
The shame and anguish of the evil day,

Wisely forgetful! O'er the ocean swell
Sublime of Hope I seek the cottaged dell
Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray;
And, dancing to the moon-light roundelay,
The wizard Passions weave a holy spell!

O Chatterton! that thou wert yet alive!
Sure thou would'st spread the canvass to the gale,
And love with us the tinkling team to drive
O'er peaceful Freedom's undivided dale;
And we, at sober eve, would round thee throng,
Would hang, enraptured, on thy stately song,
And greet with smiles the young-eyed Poesy
All deftly masked, as hoar Antiquity.

Alas, vain Phantasies! the fleeting brood
Of Woe self-solaced in her dreamy mood!
Yet will I love to follow the sweet dream,
Where Susquehana pours his untamed stream;
And on some hill, whose forest-frowning side
Waves o'er the murmurs of his calmer tide,
Will raise a solemn Cenotaph to thee,
Sweet Harper of time-shrouded Minstrelsy!
And there, soothed sadly by the dirgeful wind,
Muse on the sore ills I had left behind.

1790–96.

SONNET I.

"Content, as random Fancies might inspire,
If his weak harp at times or lonely lyre
He struck with desultory hand, and drew
Some softened tones to Nature not untrue."
BOWLES.

My heart has thanked thee, Bowles! for those soft strains
Whose sadness soothes me, like the murmuring
Of wild-bees in the sunny showers of spring!
For hence not callous to the mourner's pains
Through Youth's gay prime and thornless paths I went:
And when the mightier throes of mind began,
And drove me forth, a thought-bewildered man,
Their mild and manliest melancholy lent
A mingled charm, such as the pang consigned
To slumber, though the big tear it renewed;
Bidding a strange mysterious Pleasure brood
Over the wavy and tumultuous mind,
As the great Spirit erst with plastic sweep
Moved on the darkness of the unformed deep.

SONNET II.

As late I lay in slumber's shadowy vale,
With wetted cheek and in a mourner's guise,
I saw the sainted form of Freedom rise:
She spake! not sadder moans the autumnal gale—

"Great Son of Genius! sweet to me thy name,
Ere in an evil hour with altered voice
Thou bad'st Oppression's hireling crew rejoice
Blasting with withered spell my laurelled fame.
Yet never, Burke! thou drank'st Corruption's bowl!
Thee stormy Pity and the cherished lure
Of Pomp, and proud Precipitance of soul
Wildered with meteor fires. Ah Spirit pure!
That error's mist had left thy purged eye:
So might I clasp thee with a Mother's joy!"

SONNET III.*

Not always should the tear's ambrosial dew
Roll its soft anguish down thy furrowed cheek!
Not always heaven-breathed tones of suppliance meek
Beseem thee, Mercy! Yon dark Scowler view,
Who with proud words of dear-loved Freedom came—
More blasting than the mildew from the South!
And kissed his country with Iscariot mouth
(Ah! foul apostate from his Father's fame!)
Then fixed her on the cross of deep distress,
And at safe distance marks the thirsty lance
Pierce her big side! But O! if some strange trance
The eyelids of thy stern-browed Sister press,
Seize, Mercy! thou more terrible the brand,
And hurl her thunderbolts with fiercer hand!

* See Note.

SONNET IV.

Though roused by that dark Vizir Riot rude
Have driven our Priestley o'er the ocean swell;
Though Superstition and her wolfish brood
Bay his mild radiance, impotent and fell;
Calm in his halls of brightness he shall dwell!
For lo! Religion at his strong behest
Starts with mild anger from the Papal spell,
And flings to earth her tinsel-glittering vest,
Her mitred state and cumbrous pomp unholy;
And Justice wakes to bid the Oppressor wail
Insulting aye the wrongs of patient Folly:
And from her dark retreat by Wisdom won
Meek Nature slowly lifts her matron veil
To smile with fondness on her gazing son!

SONNET V.

When British Freedom for a happier land
Spread her broad wings, that fluttered with affright,
Erskine! thy voice she heard, and paused her flight
Sublime of hope! For dreadless thou didst stand
(Thy censer glowing with the hallowed flame)
A hireless Priest before the insulted shrine,
And at her altar pour the stream divine
Of unmatched eloquence. Therefore thy name

Her sons shall venerate, and cheer thy breast
With blessings heaven-ward breathed. And when the doom
Of Nature bids thee die, beyond the tomb
Thy light shall shine: as sunk beneath the West
Though the great Summer Sun eludes our gaze,
Still burns wide Heaven with his distended blaze.

SONNET VI.

It was some Spirit, Sheridan! that breathed
O'er thy young mind such wildly various power!
My soul hath marked thee in her shaping hour,
Thy temples with Hymettian flow'rets wreathed:
And sweet thy voice, as when o'er Laura's bier
Sad music trembled through Vauclusa's glade;
Sweet, as at dawn the love-lorn Serenade
That wafts soft dreams to Slumber's listening ear.
Now patriot Rage and Indignation high
Swell the full tones! And now thine eye-beams dance
Meanings of Scorn and Wit's quaint revelry!
Writhes inly from the bosom-probing glance
The Apostate by the brainless rout adored,
As erst that elder Fiend beneath great Michael's sword.

SONNET VII.

O WHAT a loud and fearful shriek was there,
As though a thousand souls one death-groan poured!
Ah me! they saw beneath a hireling's sword
Their Kosciusko fall! Through the swart air
(As pauses the tired Cossac's barbarous yell
Of triumph) on the chill and midnight gale
Rises with frantic burst or sadder swell
The dirge of murdered Hope! while Freedom pale
Bends in such anguish o'er her destined bier,
As if from eldest time some Spirit meek
Had gathered in a mystic urn each tear
That ever on a Patriot's furrowed cheek
Fit channel found, and she had drained the bowl
In the mere wilfulness, and sick despair of soul!

SONNET VIII.

As when far off the warbled strains are heard
That soar on Morning's wing the vales among,
Within his cage the imprisoned matin bird
Swells the full chorus with a generous song:
He bathes no pinion in the dewy light,
No Father's joy, no Lover's bliss he shares,
Yet still the rising radiance cheers his sight:
His fellows' freedom soothes the captive's cares!

Thou, Fayette! who didst wake with startling voice
Life's better sun from that long wintry night,
Thus in thy Country's triumphs shalt rejoice,
And mock with raptures high the dungeon's might:
For lo! the morning struggles into day,
And Slavery's spectres shriek and vanish from the ray!

SONNET IX.

Not Stanhope! with the Patriot's doubtful name
I mock thy worth—Friend of the Human Race!
Since, scorning Faction's low and partial aim,
Aloof thou wendest in thy stately pace,
Thyself redeeming from that leprous stain,
Nobility: and aye unterrify'd
Pourest thine Abdiel warnings on the train
That sit complotting with rebellious pride
'Gainst her,* who from the Almighty's bosom leapt
With whirlwind arm, fierce Minister of Love!
Wherefore, ere Virtue o'er thy tomb hath wept,
Angels shall lead thee to the Throne above:
And thou from forth its clouds shalt hear the voice,
Champion of Freedom and her God! rejoice!

* Gallic Liberty.

SONNET X.

Thou gentle look, that didst my soul beguile,
Why hast thou left me? Still in some fond dream
Revisit my sad heart, auspicious Smile!
As falls on closing flowers the lunar beam:
What time, in sickly mood, at parting day
I lay me down and think of happier years;
Of Joys, that glimmered in Hope's twilight ray,
Then left me darkling in a vale of tears.
O pleasant days of Hope—for ever gone!—
Could I recall you!—But that thought is vain.
Availeth not Persuasion's sweetest tone
To lure the fleet-winged Travellers back again:
Yet fair, though faint, their images shall gleam
Like the bright Rainbow on a willowy stream.

SONNET XI.

Pale Roamer through the night! thou poor Forlorn!
Remorse that man on his death-bed possess,
Who in the credulous hour of tenderness
Betrayed, then cast thee forth to want and scorn!
The world is pitiless: the chaste one's pride
Mimic of Virtue scowls on thy distress:
Thy Loves and they, that envied thee, deride:
And Vice alone will shelter wretchedness!

O ! I could weep to think, that there should be
Cold-bosomed lewd ones, who endure to place
Foul offerings on the shrine of misery,
And force from famine the caress of Love :
May He shed healing on thy sore disgrace,
He, the great Comforter that rules above !

SONNET XII.

Sweet Mercy ! how my very heart has bled
To see thee, poor Old Man ! and thy gray hairs
Hoar with the snowy blast : while no one cares
To clothe thy shrivelled limbs and palsied head.
My Father ! throw away this tattered vest
That mocks thy shivering ! take my garment—use
A young man's arm ! I'll melt these frozen dews
That hang from thy white beard and numb thy breast.
My Sara too shall tend thee, like a Child :
And thou shalt talk, in our fire-side's recess,
Of purple pride, that scowls on wretchedness.
He did not so, the Galilean mild,
Who met the Lazars turned from rich men's doors,
And called them Friends, and healed their noisome
Sores !

SONNET XIII.

TO THE AUTUMNAL MOON.

Mild Splendour of the various-vested Night!
Mother of wildly-working visions! hail!
I watch thy gliding, while with watery light
Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil;
And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud
Behind the gathered blackness lost on high;
And when thou dartest from the wind-rent cloud
Thy placid lightning o'er the awakened sky.
Ah such is Hope! as changeful and as fair!
Now dimly peering on the wistful sight;
Now hid behind the dragon-winged Despair:
But soon emerging in her radiant might
She o'er the sorrow-clouded breast of Care
Sails, like a meteor kindling in its flight.

SONNET XIV.

Thou bleedest, my poor Heart! and thy distress
Reasoning I ponder with a scornful smile,
And probe thy sore wound sternly, though the while
Swoln be mine eye and dim with heaviness.
Why didst thou listen to Hope's whisper bland?
Or, listening, why forget the healing tale,
When Jealousy with feverous fancies pale
Jarred thy fine fibres with a maniac's hand?

Faint was that Hope, and rayless!—Yet 'twas fair,
And soothed with many a dream the hour of rest:
Thou shouldst have loved it most, when most oppresst,
And nursed it with an agony of care,
Even as a Mother her sweet infant heir
That wan and sickly droops upon her breast!

SONNET XV.

TO THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROBBERS."

Schiller! that hour I would have wished to die,
If through the shuddering midnight I had sent
From the dark dungeon of the tower time-rent
That fearful voice, a famished Father's cry—
Lest in some after moment aught more mean
Might stamp me mortal! A triumphant shout
Black Horror screamed, and all her goblin rout
Diminished shrunk from the more withering scene!
Ah! Bard tremendous in sublimity!
Could I behold thee in thy loftier mood
Wandering at eve with finely frenzied eye
Beneath some vast old tempest-swinging wood!
Awhile with mute awe gazing I would brood:
Then weep aloud in a wild ecstasy!

LINES

COMPOSED WHILE CLIMBING THE LEFT ASCENT OF BROCKLEY COOMB, SOMERSETSHIRE, MAY, 1795.

With many a pause and oft reverted eye
I climb the Coomb's ascent: sweet songsters near
Warble in shade their wild-wood melody:
Far off the unvarying Cuckoo soothes my ear.
Up scour the startling stragglers of the Flock
That on green plots o'er precipices browse:
From the deep fissures of the naked rock
The Yewtree bursts! Beneath its dark green boughs
('Mid which the May-thorn blends its blossoms white)
Where broad smooth stones jut out in mossy seats,
I rest:—and now have gained the topmost site.
Ah! what a luxury of landscape meets
My gaze! Proud towers, and cots more dear to me,
Elm-shadow'd fields, and prospect-bounding sea!
Deep sighs my lonely heart: I drop the tear:
Enchanting spot! O were my Sara here!

LINES

IN THE MANNER OF SPENSER.

O Peace, that on a lilied bank dost love
To rest thine head beneath an olive tree,
I would that from the pinions of thy dove
One quill withouten pain yplucked might be!

For O! I wish my Sara's frowns to flee,
And fain to her some soothing song would write,
Lest she resent my rude discourtesy,
Who vowed to meet her ere the morning light,
But broke my plighted word—ah! false and recreant
wight!

Last night as I my weary head did pillow
With thoughts of my dissevered Fair engrost,
Chill Fancy drooped wreathing herself with willow,
As though my breast entombed a pining ghost.
"From some blest couch, young Rapture's bridal boast,
Rejected Slumber! hither wing thy way;
But leave me with the matin hour, at most!
As night-closed flowret to the orient ray,
My sad heart will expand, when I the Maid survey."

But Love, who heard the silence of my thought,
Contrived a too successful wile, I ween:
And whispered to himself, with malice fraught—
"Too long our Slave the Damsel's smiles hath seen:
To-morrow shall he ken her altered mien!"
He spake, and ambushed lay, till on my bed
The morning shot her dewy glances keen,
When as I 'gan to lift my drowsy head—
"Now, Bard! I'll work thee woe!" the laughing Elfin
said.

Sleep, softly-breathing God! his downy wing
Was fluttering now, as quickly to depart;
When twanged an arrow from Love's mystic string,
With pathless wound it pierced him to the heart.

Was there some magic in the Elfin's dart?
Or did he strike my couch with wizard lance?
For straight so fair a Form did upwards start
(No fairer decked the bowers of old Romance)
That Sleep enamoured grew, nor moved from his sweet trance!

My Sara came, with gentlest look divine;
Bright shone her eye, yet tender was its beam:
I felt the pressure of her lip to mine!
Whispering we went, and Love was all our theme—
Love pure and spotless, as at first, I deem,
He sprang from Heaven! Such joys with Sleep did 'bide,
That I the living image of my dream
Fondly forgot. Too late I woke, and sigh'd—
"O! how shall I behold my Love at even-tide!"

July, 1795.

TO THE AUTHOR OF POEMS

PUBLISHED ANONYMOUSLY AT BRISTOL, IN SEPTEMBER, 1795.

UNBOASTFUL Bard! whose verse concise yet clear
Tunes to smooth melody unconquered sense,
May your fame fadeless live, as "never-sere"
The Ivy wreathes yon Oak, whose broad defence
Embowers me from Noon's sultry influence!
For like that nameless Rivulet stealing by,
Your modest verse to musing quiet dear,
Is rich with tints heaven-borrowed; the charmed eye
Shall gaze undazzled there, and love the softened sky.

Circling the base of the Poetic mount
A stream there is, which rolls in lazy flow
Its coal-black waters from Oblivion's fount;
The vapour-poisoned Birds, that fly too low,
Fall with dead swoop, and to the bottom go.
Escaped that heavy stream on pinion fleet
Beneath the Mountain's lofty frowning brow,
Ere aught of perilous ascent you meet,
A mead of mildest charm delays the unlabouring feet.

Not there the cloud-climbed rock, sublime and vast,
That like some giant king o'erglooms the hill;
Nor there the Pine-grove to the midnight blast
Makes solemn music! But the unceasing rill
To the soft Wren or Lark's descending trill
Murmurs sweet under-song mid jasmine bowers.
In this same pleasant meadow, at your will
I ween, you wandered—there collecting flowers
Of sober tint, and herbs of med'cinable powers!

There for the monarch-murdered Soldier's tomb
You wove the unfinished wreath of saddest hues; *
And to that holier chaplet added bloom
Besprinkling it with Jordan's cleansing dews.†
But lo! your Henderson awakes the Muse—‡
His Spirit beckoned from the Mountain's height!
You left the plain and soared 'mid richer views!
So Nature mourned, when sunk the First Day's light,
With stars, unseen before, spangling her robe of night.

* War, a Fragment.
† John the Baptist, a Poem. ‡ Monody on John Henderson.

Still soar, my Friend, those richer views among,
Strong, rapid, fervent, flashing Fancy's beam!
Virtue and Truth shall love your gentler song,
But Poesy demands the impassioned theme;
Waked by Heaven's silent dews at Eve's mild gleam
What balmy sweets Pomona breathes around!
But if the vext air rush a stormy stream,
Or Autumn's shrill gust moan in plaintive sound,
With fruits and flowers she loads the tempest-honoured ground.

LINES.

WRITTEN AT SHURTON BARS, NEAR BRIDGEWATER, SEPTEMBER, 1795, IN ANSWER TO A LETTER FROM BRISTOL.

> "Good verse most good, and bad verse then seems better,
> Received from absent friend, by way of Letter,
> For what so sweet can laboured lays impart
> As one rude rhyme warm from a friendly heart."
>
> ANON.

Nor travels my meandering eye
The starry wilderness on high;
Nor now with curious sight
I mark the glow-worm, as I pass,
Move with "green radiance" through the grass,
An emerald of light.

O ever present to my view!
My wafted spirit is with you,
And soothes your boding fears:
I see you all oppressed with gloom
Sit lonely in that cheerless room—
Ah me! You are in tears!

Beloved Woman! did you fly
Chilled Friendship's dark disliking eye,
  Or Mirth's untimely din?
With cruel weight these trifles press
A temper sore with tenderness,
  When aches the Void within.

But why with sable wand unblest
Should Fancy rouse within my breast
  Dim-visaged shapes of Dread?
Untenanting its beauteous clay
My Sara's soul has winged its way,
  And hovers round my head!

I felt it prompt the tender dream,
When slowly sank the day's last gleam;
  You roused each gentler sense,
As sighing o'er the blossom's bloom
Meek Evening wakes its soft perfume
  With viewless influence.

And hark, my Love! The sea-breeze moans
Through yon reft house! O'er rolling stones
  In bold ambitious sweep,
The onward-surging tides supply
The silence of the cloudless sky
  With mimic thunders deep.

Dark reddening from the channelled Isle*
(Where stands one solitary pile

* The Holmes, in the Bristol Channel.

Unslated by the blast)
The watchfire, like a sullen star
Twinkles to many a dozing tar
Rude cradled on the mast.

Even there—beneath that light-house tower—
In the tumultuous evil hour
Ere Peace with Sara came,
Time was, I should have thought it sweet
To count the echoings of my feet,
And watched the storm-vexed flame.

And there in black soul-jaundiced fit
A sad gloom-pampered Man to sit,
And listen to the roar:
When mountain surges bellowing deep
With an uncouth monster leap
Plunged foaming on the shore.

Then by the lightning's blaze to mark
Some toiling tempest-shattered bark;
Her vain distress-guns hear;
And when a second sheet of light
Flashed o'er the blackness of the night—
To see no vessel there!

But Fancy now more gaily sings;
Or if awhile she droop her wings,
As sky-lards 'mid the corn,
On summer fields she grounds her breast:
The oblivious poppy o'er her nest
Nods, till returning morn.

O mark those smiling tears, that swell
The opened rose! From heaven they fell,
And with the sun-beam blend.
Blest visitations from above,
Such are the tender woes of Love
Fostering the heart they bend!

When stormy Midnight howling round
Beats on our roof with clattering sound,
To me your arms you'll stretch:
Great God! you'll say—To us so kind,
O shelter from this loud bleak wind
The houseless, friendless wretch!

The tears that tremble down your cheek,
Shall bathe my kisses chaste and meek
In Pity's dew divine;
And from your heart the sighs that steal
Shall make your rising bosom feel
The answering swell of mine!

How oft, my Love! with shapings sweet
I paint the moment, we shall meet!
With eager speed I dart—
I seize you in the vacant air,
And fancy, with a husband's care
I press you to my heart!

'Tis said, in Summer's evening hour
Flashes the golden-coloured flower
A fair electric flame:
And so shall flash my love-charged eye
When all the heart's big ecstasy
Shoots rapid through the frame!

LINES

TO A FRIEND IN ANSWER TO A MELANCHOLY LETTER.

Away, those cloudy looks, that labouring sigh,
The peevish offspring of a sickly hour!
Nor meanly thus complain of Fortune's power,
When the blind gamester throws a luckless die.

Yon setting sun flashes a mournful gleam
Behind those broken clouds, his stormy train:
To-morrow shall the many-coloured main
In brightness roll beneath his orient beam!

Wild, as the autumnal gust, the hand of Time
Flies o'er his mystic lyre: in shadowy dance
The alternate groups of Joy and Grief advance
Responsive to his varying strains sublime!

Bears on its wing each hour a load of Fate;
The swain, who, lulled by Seine's mild murmurs, led
His weary oxen to their nightly shed,
To-day may rule a tempest-troubled State.

Nor shall not Fortune with a vengeful smile
Survey the sanguinary despot's might,
And haply hurl the pageant from his height
Unwept to wander in some savage isle.

There shiv'ring sad beneath the tempest's frown
Round his tired limbs to wrap the purple vest;
And mixed with nails and beads, an equal jest!
Barter for food the jewels of his crown.

RELIGIOUS MUSINGS;

A DESULTORY POEM, WRITTEN ON THE CHRISTMAS EVE OF 1794.

THIS is the time, when most divine to hear,
The voice of adoration rouses me,
As with a Cherub's trump: and high upborne,
Yea, mingling with the choir, I seem to view
The vision of the heavenly multitude,
Who hymned the song of peace o'er Bethlehem's fields!
Yet thou more bright than all the angel blaze,
That harbingered thy birth, Thou, Man of Woes!
Despised Galilean! For the great
Invisible (by symbols only seen)
With a peculiar and surpassing light
Shines from the visage of the oppressed good man,
When heedless of himself the scourged Saint
Mourns for the oppressor. Fair the vernal mead,
Fair the high grove, the sea, the sun, the stars;
True impress each of their creating Sire!
Yet nor high grove, nor many-coloured mead,
Nor the green Ocean with his thousand isles,
Nor the starred azure, nor the sovran Sun,
E'er with such majesty of portraiture
Imaged the supreme beauty uncreate,
As thou, meek Saviour! at the fearful hour
When thy insulted anguish winged the prayer
Harped by Archangels, when they sing of mercy!
Which when the Almighty heard from forth his throne
Diviner light filled Heaven with ecstasy!
Heaven's hymnings paused: and Hell her yawning mouth
Closed a brief moment.

Lovely was the death
Of Him whose life was Love! Holy with power
He on the thought-benighted Sceptic beamed
Manifest Godhead, melting into day
What floating mists of dark idolatry
Broke and misshaped the omnipresent Sire:
And first by Fear uncharmed the drowsed Soul.
Till of its nobler nature it 'gan feel
Dim recollections; and thence soared to Hope,
Strong to believe whate'er of mystic good
The Eternal dooms for his immortal sons.
From Hope and firmer Faith to perfect Love
Attracted and absorbed: and centred there
God only to behold, and know, and feel,
Till by exclusive consciousness of God
All self-annihilated it shall make
God its identity: God all in all!
We and our Father one!

And blest are they,
Who in this fleshly World, the elect of Heaven,
Their strong eye darting through the deeds of men,
Adore with steadfast unpresuming gaze
Him Nature's essence, mind, and energy!
And gazing, trembling, patiently ascend
Treading beneath their feet all visible things
As steps, that upward to their Father's throne
Lead gradual—else nor glorified nor loved.
They nor contempt embosom nor revenge:
For they dare know of what may seem deform
The Supreme Fair sole operant: in whose sight
All things are pure, his strong controlling Love
Alike from all educing perfect good.

Theirs too celestial courage, inly armed—
Dwarfing Earth's giant brood, what time they muse
On their great Father, great beyond compare!
And marching onwards view high o'er their heads
His waving banners of Omnipotence.

Who the Creator love, created might
Dread not: within their tents no terrors walk.
For they are holy things before the Lord
Aye unprofaned, though Earth should league with Hell;
God's altar grasping with an eager hand,
Fear, the wild-visaged, pale, eye-starting wretch,
Sure-refuged hears his hot pursuing fiends
Yell at vain distance. Soon refreshed from Heaven
He calms the throb and tempest of his heart.
His countenance settles; a soft solemn bliss
Swims in his eye—his swimming eye upraised:
And Faith's whole armour glitters on his limbs!
And thus transfigured with a dreadless awe,
A solemn hush of soul, meek he beholds
All things of terrible seeming: yea, unmoved
Views e'en the inmitigable ministers
That shower down vengeance on these latter days.
For kindling with intenser Deity
From the celestial Mercy-seat they come,
And at the renovating wells of Love
Have filled their vials with salutary wrath,
To sickly Nature more medicinal
Than what soft balm the weeping good man pours
Into the lone despoiled traveller's wounds!

Thus from the Elect, regenerate through faith,
Pass the dark Passions and what thirsty Cares

Drink up the Spirit, and the dim regards
Self-centre. Lo they vanish! or acquire
New names, new features—by supernal grace
Enrobed with Light, and naturalised in Heaven.
As when a shepherd on a vernal morn
Through some thick fog creeps timorous with slow foot,
Darkling he fixes on the immediate road
His downward eye: all else of fairest kind
Hid or deformed. But lo! the bursting Sun!
Touched by the enchantment of that sudden beam
Straight the black vapour melteth, and in globes
Of dewy glitter gems each plant and tree;
On every leaf, on every blade it hangs!
Dance glad the new-born intermingling rays,
And wide around the landscape streams with glory!

There is one Mind, one omnipresent Mind,
Omnific. His most holy name is Love.
Truth of subliming import! with the which
Who feeds and saturates his constant soul,
He from his small particular orbit flies,
With blest outstarting! From Himself he flies,
Stands in the sun, and with no partial gaze
Views all creation; and he loves it all,
And blesses it, and calls it very good!
This is indeed to dwell with the most High!
Cherubs and rapture-trembling Seraphim
Can press no nearer to the Almighty's Throne.
But that we roam unconscious, or with hearts
Unfeeling of our universal Sire,
And that in his vast family no Cain
Injures uninjured (in her best-aimed blow
Victorious murder a blind suicide)

Haply for this some younger Angel now
Looks down on human nature: and, behold!
A sea of blood bestrewed with wrecks, where mad
Embattling interests on each other rush
With unhelmed rage!

'Tis the sublime of man,
Our noontide majesty, to know ourselves
Parts and proportions of one wondrous whole!
This fraternises man, this constitutes
Our charities and bearings. But 'tis God
Diffused through all, that doth make all one whole;
This the worst superstition, him except
Aught to desire, Supreme Reality!
The plenitude and permanence of bliss!
O Fiends of Superstition! not that oft
The erring priest hath stained with brother's blood
Your grisly idols, not for this may wrath
Thunder against you from the Holy One!
But o'er some plain that steameth to the sun,
Peopled with death; or where more hideous Trade
Loud-laughing packs his bales of human anguish;
I will raise up a mourning, O ye Fiends!
And curse your spells, that film the eye of Faith,
Hiding the present God; whose presence lost,
The moral world's cohesion, we become
An anarchy of Spirits! Toy-bewitched,
Made blind by lusts, disherited of soul,
No common centre Man, no common sire
Knoweth! A sordid solitary thing,
'Mid countless brethren with a lonely heart
Through courts and cities the smooth savage roams
Feeling himself, his own low self the whole;

When he by sacred sympathy might make
The whole one self! self, that no alien knows!
Self, far diffused as Fancy's wing can travel!
Self, spreading still! Oblivious of its own,
Yet all of all possessing! This is Faith!
This the Messiah's destined victory!
But first offences needs must come! Even now *
(Black Hell laughs horrible—to hear the scoff!)
Thee to defend, meek Galilean! Thee
And thy mild laws of Love unutterable,
Mistrust and enmity have burst the bands
Of social peace; and listening treachery lurks
With pious fraud to snare a brother's life;
And childless widows o'er the groaning land
Wail numberless; and orphans weep for bread.
Thee to defend, dear Saviour of mankind!
Thee, Lamb of God! Thee, blameless Prince of peace!
From all sides rush the thirsty brood of War,—
Austria, and that foul Woman of the North,
The lustful murderess of her wedded lord!
And he, connatural mind! (whom in their songs
So bards of elder time had haply feigned)
Some Fury fondled in her hate to man,

* January 21st, 1794, in the debate on the address to his Majesty, on the speech from the Throne, the Earl of Guildford moved an amendment to the following effect:—"That the House hoped his Majesty would seize the earliest opportunity to conclude a peace with France," &c. This motion was opposed by the Duke of Portland, who "considered the war to be merely grounded on one principle—the preservation of the Christian Religion." May 30th, 1794, the Duke of Bedford moved a number of resolutions, with a view to the establishment of a peace with France. He was opposed (among others) by Lord Abingdon, in these remarkable words: "The best road to Peace, my Lords, is War! and War carried on in the same manner in which we are taught to worship our Creator, namely, with all our souls, and with all our minds, and with all our hearts, and with all our strength.

Bidding her serpent hair in mazy surge
Lick his young face, and at his mouth imbreathe
Horrible sympathy! And leagued with these
Each petty German princeling, nursed in gore!
Soul-hardened barterers of human blood!
Death's prime slave-merchants! Scorpion-whips of Fate!
Nor least in savagery of holy zeal,
Apt for the yoke, the race degenerate,
Whom Britain erst had blushed to call her sons!
Thee to defend the Moloch priest prefers
The prayer of hate, and bellows to the herd
That Deity, accomplice Deity
In the fierce jealousy of wakened wrath
Will go forth with our armies and our fleets
To scatter the red ruin on their foes!
O blasphemy! to mingle fiendish deeds
With blessedness!

Lord of unsleeping Love,*
From everlasting Thou! We shall not die.
These, even these, in mercy didst thou form,
Teachers of Good through Evil, by brief wrong
Making Truth lovely, and her future might
Magnetic o'er the fixed untrembling heart.
In the primeval age a dateless while
The vacant Shepherd wandered with his flock,
Pitching his tent where'er the green grass waved.
But soon Imagination conjured up
A host of new desires: with busy aim,

* Art thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, mine Holy One? We shall not die. O Lord, thou hast ordained them for judgment, &c.—*Habakkuk*.

Each for himself, Earth's eager children toiled.
So Property began, twy-streaming fount,
Whence Vice and Virtue flow, honey and gall.
Hence the soft couch, and many-coloured robe,
The timbrel, and arch'd dome and costly feast,
With all the inventive arts, that nursed the soul
To forms of beauty, and by sensual wants
Unsensualised the mind, which in the means
Learnt to forget the grossness of the end,
Best pleasured with its own activity.
And hence Disease that withers manhood's arm,
The daggered Envy, spirit-quenching Want,
Warriors, and Lords, and Priests—all the sore ills
That vex and desolate our mortal life.
Wide-wasting ills! yet each the immediate source
Of mightier good. Their keen necessities
To ceaseless action goading human thought
Have made Earth's reasoning animal her Lord;
And the pale-featured Sage's trembling hand
Strong as a host of armed Deities,
Such as the blind Ionian fabled erst.

From avarice thus, from luxury and war
Sprang heavenly science; and from science freedom.
O'er wakened realms Philosophers and Bards
Spread in concentric circles: they whose souls,
Conscious of their high dignities from God,
Brook not wealth's rivalry! and they who long
Enamoured with the charms of order hate
The unseemly disproportion: and whoe'er
Turn with mild sorrow from the victor's car
And the low puppetry of thrones, to muse
On that blest triumph, when the patriot Sage

Called the red lightnings from the o'er-rushing cloud
And dashed the beauteous terrors on the earth
Smiling majestic. Such a phalanx ne'er
Measured firm paces to the calming sound
Of Spartan flute! These on the fated day,
When, stung to rage by pity, eloquent men
Have roused with pealing voice the unnumbered tribes
That toil and groan and bleed, hungry and blind,—
These hushed awhile with patient eye serene
Shall watch the mad careering of the storm;
Then o'er the wild and wavy chaos rush
And tame the outrageous mass, with plastic might
Moulding confusion to such perfect forms,
As erst were wont,—bright visions of the day!—
To float before them, when, the summer noon,
Beneath some arch'd romantic rock reclined
They felt the sea breeze lift their youthful locks;
Or in the month of blossoms, at mild eve,
Wandering with desultory feet inhaled
The wafted perfumes, and the flocks and woods
And many-tinted streams and setting sun
With all his gorgeous company of clouds
Ecstatic gazed! then homeward as they strayed
Cast the sad eye to earth, and inly mused
Why there was misery in a world so fair.
Ah! far removed from all that glads the sense,
From all that softens or ennobles Man,
The wretched Many! Bent beneath their loads
They gape at pageant Power, nor recognise
Their cots' transmuted plunder! From the tree
Of Knowledge, ere the vernal sap had risen
Rudely disbranched! Blest Society!
Fitliest depictured by some sun-scorched waste,

Where oft majestic through the tainted noon
The Simoom sails, before whose purple pomp
Who falls not prostrate dies! And where by night,
Fast by each precious fountain on green herbs
The lion couches; or hyæna dips
Deep in the lucid stream his bloody jaws;
Or serpent plants his vast moon-glittering bulk,
Caught in whose monstrous twine Behemoth* yells,
His bones loud-crashing!

O ye numberless,
Whom foul oppression's ruffian gluttony
Drives from life's plenteous feast! O thou poor wretch
Who nursed in darkness and made wild by want,
Roamest for prey, yea thy unnatural hand
Dost lift to deeds of blood! O pale-eyed form,
The victim of seduction, doomed to know
Polluted nights and days of blasphemy;
Who in loathed orgies with lewd wassailers
Must gaily laugh, while thy remembered home
Gnaws like a viper at thy secret heart!
O aged women! ye who weekly catch
The morsel tossed by law-forced charity,
And die so slowly, that none call it murder!
O loathly suppliants! ye, that unreceived
Totter heart-broken from the closing gates
Of the full Lazar-house: or, gazing, stand
Sick with despair! O ye to glory's field
Forced or ensnared, who, as ye gasp in death,
Bleed with new wounds beneath the vulture's beak!

* Behemoth, in Hebrew, signifies wild beasts in general. Some believe it is the elephant, some the hippopotamus; some affirm it is the wild bull. Poetically, it designates any large quadruped.

O thou poor widow, who in dreams dost view
Thy husband's mangled corse, and from short doze
Start'st with a shriek; or in thy half-thatched cot
Waked by the wintry night-storm, wet and cold
Cow'r'st o'er thy screaming baby! Rest awhile,
Children of wretchedness! More groans must rise,
More blood must stream, or ere your wrongs be full.
Yet is the day of retribution nigh:
The Lamb of God hath opened the fifth seal:
And upward rush on swiftest wing of fire
The innumerable multitude of Wrongs
By man on man inflicted! Rest awhile,
Children of wretchedness! The hour is nigh;
And lo! the great, the rich, the mighty Men,
The Kings and the chief Captains of the World,
With all that fixed on high like stars of Heaven
Shot baleful influence, shall be cast to earth,
Vile and down-trodden, as the untimely fruit
Shook from the fig-tree by a sudden storm.
Even now the storm begins:* each gentle name,
Faith and meek Piety, with fearful joy
Tremble far-off—for lo! the giant Frenzy
Uprooting empires with his whirlwind arm
Mocketh high Heaven; burst hideous from the cell
Where the old Hag, unconquerable, huge,
Creation's eyeless drudge, black ruin, sits
Nursing the impatient earthquake.

O return!
Pure Faith, meek Piety! The abhorred Form
Whose scarlet robe was stiff with earthly pomp,
Who drank iniquity in cups of gold,

* Alluding to the French Revolution.

Whose names were many and all blasphemous,
Hath met the horrible judgment! Whence that cry?
The mighty army of foul Spirits shrieked
Disherited of earth! For she hath fallen
On whose black front was written Mystery;
She that reeled heavily, whose wine was blood;
She that worked whoredom with the Demon Power,
And from the dark embrace all evil things
Brought forth and nurtured: mitred atheism!
And patient Folly who on bended knee
Gives back the steel that stabbed him; and pale Fear
Haunted by ghastlier shapings than surround
Moon-blasted Madness when he yells at midnight!
Return pure Faith! return meek Piety!
The kingdoms of the world are yours: each heart
Self-governed, the vast family of Love
Raised from the common earth by common toil
Enjoy the equal produce. Such delights
As float to earth, permitted visitants!
When in some hour of solemn jubilee
The massy gates of Paradise are thrown
Wide open, and forth come in fragments wild
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
And odours snatched from beds of amaranth,
And they, that from the crystal river of life
Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales!
The favoured good man in his lonely walk
Perceives them, and his silent spirit drinks
Strange bliss which he shall recognise in heaven.
And such delights, such strange beatitudes
Seize on my young anticipating heart
When that blest future rushes on my view!
For in his own and in his Father's might

The Saviour comes! While as the Thousand Years
Lead up their mystic dance, the Desert shouts!
Old Ocean claps his hands! The mighty Dead
Rise to new life, whoe'er from earliest time
With conscious zeal had urged Love's wondrous plan,
Coadjutors of God. To Milton's trump
The high groves of the renovated Earth
Unbosom their glad echoes: inly hushed,
Adoring Newton his serener eye
Raises to Heaven: and he of mortal kind
Wisest, he* first who marked the ideal tribes
Up the fine fibres through the sentient brain.
Lo! Priestley there, patriot, and saint, and sage,
Him, full of years, from his loved native land
Statesmen blood-stained and priests idolatrous
By dark lies maddening the blind multitude
Drove with vain hate. Calm, pitying he retired,
And mused expectant on these promised years.

O Years! the blest pre-eminence of Saints!
Ye sweep athwart my gaze, so heavenly bright,
The wings that veil the adoring Seraphs' eyes,
What time they bend before the Jasper Throne†
Reflect no lovelier hues! Yet ye depart,
And all beyond is darkness! Heights most strange,
Whence Fancy falls, fluttering her idle wing.
For who of woman born may paint the hour,
When seized in his mid course, the Sun shall wane
Making noon ghastly! Who of woman born
May image in the workings of his thought,

* David Hartley.

† Rev. chap. iv. verses 2 and 3.—And immediately I was in the Spirit: and behold, a Throne was set in Heaven and one sat on the Throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone, &c.

How the black-visaged, red-eyed Fiend outstretched*
Beneath the unsteady feet of Nature groans,
In feverous slumbers—destined then to wake,
When fiery whirlwinds thunder his dread name
And Angels shout, Destruction! How his arm
The last great Spirit lifting high in air
Shall swear by Him, the ever-living one,
Time is no more!

Believe thou, O my soul,
Life is a vision shadowy of Truth;
And vice, and anguish, and the wormy grave,
Shapes of a dream! The veiling clouds retire,
And lo! the Throne of the redeeming God
Forth flashing unimaginable day
Wraps in one blaze earth, heaven, and deepest hell.

Contemplant Spirits! ye that hover o'er
With untired gaze the immeasurable fount
Ebullient with creative Deity!
And ye of plastic power, that interfused
Roll through the grosser and material mass
In organising surge! Holies of God!
(And what if Monads of the infinite mind)
I haply journeying my immortal course
Shall sometime join your mystic choir. Till then
I discipline my young and novice thought
In ministeries of heart-stirring song,
And aye on Meditation's heaven-ward wing
Soaring aloft I breathe the empyreal air
Of Love, omnific, omnipresent Love,
Whose day-spring rises glorious in my soul

* The final destruction impersonated.

As the great Sun, when he his influence
Sheds on the frost-bound waters—The glad stream
Flows to the ray and warbles as it flows.

THE DESTINY OF NATIONS.

A VISION.

Auspicious Reverence! Hush all meaner song,
Ere we the deep preluding strain have poured
To the Great Father, only Rightful King,
Eternal Father! King Omnipotent!
To the Will Absolute, the One, the Good!
The I AM, the Word, the Life, the Living God!

Such symphony requires best instrument.
Seize, then, my soul! from Freedom's trophied dome
The harp which hangeth high between the shields
Of Brutus and Leonidas! With that
Strong music, that soliciting spell, force back
Man's free and stirring spirit that lies entranced.

For what is freedom, but the unfettered use
Of all the powers which God for use had given?
But chiefly this, him first, him last to view
Through meaner powers and secondary things
Effulgent, as through clouds that veil his blaze.
For all that meets the bodily sense I deem
Symbolical, one mighty alphabet
For infant minds; and we in this low world

Placed with our backs to bright reality,
That we may learn with young unwounded ken
The substance from its shadow. Infinite Love,
Whose latence is the plenitude of all,
Thou with retracted beams, and self-eclipse
Veiling, revealest thine eternal Sun.

But some there are who deem themselves most free
When they within this gross and visible sphere
Chain down the winged thought, scoffing ascent,
Proud in their meanness: and themselves they cheat
With noisy emptiness of learned phrase,
Their subtle fluids, impacts, essences,
Self-working tools, uncaused effects, and all
Those blind omniscients, those almighty slaves,
Untenanting creation of its God.

But properties are God: the naked mass
(If mass there be, fantastic guess or ghost)
Acts only by its inactivity.
Here we pause humbly. Others boldlier think
That as one body seems the aggregate
Of atoms numberless, each organized;
So by a strange and dim similitude
Infinite myriads of self-conscious minds
Are one all-conscious Spirit, which informs
With absolute ubiquity of thought
(His one eternal self-affirming act!)
All his involved Monads, that yet seem
With various province and apt agency
Each to pursue its own self-centring end.
Some nurse the infant diamond in the mine;
Some roll the genial juices through the oak;

Some drive the mutinous clouds to clash in air,
And rushing on the storm with whirlwind speed,
Yoke the red lightnings to their volleying car.
Thus these pursue their never-varying course,
No eddy in their stream. Others, more wild,
With complex interests weaving human fates,
Duteous or proud, alike obedient all,
Evolve the process of eternal good.

And what if some rebellious o'er dark realms
Arrogate power? yet these train up to God,
And on the rude eye, unconfirmed for day,
Flash meteor-lights better than total gloom.
As ere from Lieule-Oaive's vapoury head
The Laplander beholds the far-off sun
Dart his slant beam on unobeying snows,
While yet the stern and solitary night
Brooks no alternate sway, the Boreal Morn
With mimic lustre substitutes its gleam,
Guiding his course or by Niemi lake
Or Balda Zhiok,* or the mossy stone
Of Solfar-kapper,† while the snowy blast
Drifts arrowy by, or eddies round his sledge,
Making the poor babe at its mother's back ‡

* Balda Zhiok; *i. e.* mons altitudinis, the highest mountain in Lapland.

† Solfar-kapper; capitium Solfar, hic locus omnium quotquot veterum Lapponum superstitio sacrificiis religiosoque cultui dedicavit, celebratissimus erat, in parte sinus australis sicus semimilliaris spatio a mari distans. Ipse locus, quem curiositatis gratia aliquando me invisisse memini, duabus prealtis lapidibus, sibi invicem oppositis, quorum alter musco circumdatus erat, constabat.—*Leemius de Lapponibus.*

‡ The Lapland women carry their infants at their back in a piece of excavated wood, which serves them for a cradle. Opposite to the infant's mouth there is a hole for it to breathe through.—Mirandum prorsus est et vix credibile nisi cui vidisse contigit. Lappones hyeme iter facientes per vastos montes, perque horrida et invia tesqua, eo presertim tempore quo omnia perpetuis

Scream in its scanty cradle: he the while
Wins gentle solace as with upward eye
He marks the streamy banners of the North,
Thinking himself those happy spirits shall join
Who there in floating robes of rosy light
Dance sportively. For Fancy is the power
That first unsensualises the dark mind,
Giving it new delights; and bids it swell
With wild activity; and peopling air,
By obscure fears of beings invisible,
Emancipates it from the grosser thrall
Of the present impulse, teaching self-control,
Till Superstition with unconscious hand
Seat Reason on her throne. Wherefore not vain,
Nor yet without permitted power impressed,
I deem those legends terrible, with which
The polar ancient thrills his uncouth throng:
Whether of pitying Spirits that make their moan
O'er slaughtered infants, or that giant bird
Vuokho, of whose rushing wings the noise
Is tempest, when the unutterable * shape
Speeds from the mother of Death, and utters once
That shriek, which never murderer heard, and lived.

Or if the Greenland Wizard in strange trance
Pierces the untravelled realms of Ocean's bed
Over the abysm, even to that uttermost cave
By mis-shaped prodigies beleaguered, such
As earth ne'er bred, nor air, nor the upper sea:

nivibus obtecta sunt et nives ventis agitantur et in gyros aguntur, viam ad destinata loca absque errore invenire posse, lactantem autem infantem si quem habeat, ipsa mater in dorso bajulat, in excavato ligno (Gieed'k ipsi vocant) quod pro cunis utuntur: in hoc infans pannis et pellibus convolutus colligatus jacet.—*Leemius de Lapponibus.* * Jaibme Aibmo.

Where dwells the Fury Form, whose unheard name
With eager eye, pale cheek, suspended breath,
And lips half-opening with the dread of sound,
Unsleeping Silence guards, worn out with fear
Lest haply 'scaping on some treacherous blast
The fateful word let slip the elements
And frenzy Nature. Yet the wizard her,
Armed with Torngarsuck's* power, the Spirit of Good,
Forces to unchain the foodful progeny
Of the Ocean stream;——thence thro' the realm of Souls,
Where live the Innocent, as far from cares
As from the storms and overwhelming waves
That tumble on the surface of the Deep,
Returns with far-heard pant, hotly pursued
By the fierce Warders of the Sea, once more,
Ere by the frost foreclosed, to repossess
His fleshly mansion, that had staid the while
In the dark tent within a cow'ring group
Untenanted.—Wild phantasies! yet wise,
On the victorious goodness of high God
Teaching reliance, and medicinal hope,
Till from Bethabra northward, heavenly Truth
With gradual steps, winning her difficult way,
Transfer their rude Faith perfected and pure.

If there be beings of higher class than Man,
I deem no nobler province they possess,

* They call the Good Spirit Torngarsuck. The other great but malignant spirit is a nameless Female; she dwells under the sea in a great house, where she can detain in captivity all the animals of the ocean by her magic power. When a dearth befalls the Greenlanders, an Angekok or magician must undertake a journey thither. He passes through the kingdom of souls, over a horrible abyss into the Palace of this phantom, and by his enchantments causes the captive creatures to ascend directly to the surface of the ocean.—*See Crantz's History of Greenland*, vol. i. 206.

Than by disposal of apt circumstance
To rear up kingdoms: and the deeds they prompt
Distinguishing from mortal agency,
They choose their human ministers from such states
As still the Epic song half fears to name,
Repelled from all the minstrelsies that strike
The palace-roof and soothe the monarch's pride.

And such, perhaps, the Spirit, who (if words
Witnessed by answering deeds may claim our faith)
Held commune with that warrior-maid of France
Who scourged the Invader. From her infant days,
With Wisdom, mother of retired thoughts,
Her soul had dwelt; and she was quick to mark
The good and evil thing, in human lore
Undisciplined. For lowly was her birth,
And Heaven had doomed her early years to toil
That pure from tyranny's least deed, herself
Unfeared by fellow-natures, she might wait
On the poor labouring man with kindly looks,
And minister refreshment to the tried
Way-wanderer, when along the rough hewn bench
The sweltry man had stretched him, and aloft
Vacantly watched the rudely pictured board
Which on the mulberry-bough with welcome creak
Swung to the pleasant breeze. Here, too, the Maid
Learnt more than schools could teach: Man's shifting mind,
His vices and his sorrows! And full oft
At tales of cruel wrong and strange distress
Had wept and shivered. To the tottering eld
Still as a daughter would she run: she placed
His cold limbs at the sunny door, and loved

To hear him story, in his garrulous sort,
Of his eventful years, all come and gone.

So twenty seasons past. The Virgin's form,
Active and tall, nor sloth nor luxury
Had shrunk or paled. Her front sublime and broad,
Her flexile eye-brows wildly haired and low,
And her full eye, now bright, now unillumed,
Spake more than Woman's thought; and all her face
Was moulded to such features as declared
That pity there had oft and strongly worked,
And sometimes indignation. Bold her mien,
And like a haughty huntress of the woods
She moved: yet sure she was a gentle maid!
And in each motion her most innocent soul
Beamed forth so brightly, that who saw would say
Guilt was a thing impossible in her!
Nor idly would have said—for she had lived
In this bad World as in a place of tombs,
And touched not the pollutions of the dead.

'Twas the cold season when the rustic's eye
From the drear desolate whiteness of his fields
Rolls for relief to watch the skiey tints
And clouds slow varying their huge imagery;
When now, as she was wont, the healthful Maid
Had left her pallet ere one beam of day
Slanted the fog-smoke. She went forth alone
Urged by the indwelling angel-guide, that oft,
With dim inexplicable sympathies
Disquieting the heart, shapes out Man's course
To the predoomed adventure. Now the ascent
She climbs of that steep upland, on whose top

The Pilgrim-man, who long since eve had watched
The alien shine of unconcerning stars,
Shouts to himself, there first the Abbey-lights
Seen in Neufchatel's vale; now slopes adown
The winding sheep-track vale-ward: when, behold
In the first entrance of the level road
An unattended team! The foremost horse
Lay with stretched limbs; the others, yet alive
But stiff and cold, stood motionless, their manes
Hoar with the frozen night dews. Dismally
The dark red dawn now glimmered; but its gleams
Disclosed no face of man. The maiden paused,
Then hailed who might be near. No voice replied.
From the thwart wain at length there reached her ear
A sound so feeble that it almost seemed
Distant: and feebly, with slow effort pushed,
A miserable man crept forth: his limbs
The silent frost had eat, scathing like fire.
Faint on the shafts he rested. She, mean time,
Saw crowded close beneath the coverture
A mother and her children—lifeless all,
Yet lovely! not a lineament was marred—
Death had put on so slumber-like a form!
It was a piteous sight; and one, a babe,
The crisp milk frozen on its innocent lips,
Lay on the woman's arm, its little hand
Stretched on her bosom.

Mutely questioning,
The Maid gazed wildly at the living wretch.
He, his head feebly turning, on the group
Looked with a vacant stare, and his eye spoke
The drowsy calm that steals on worn-out anguish.

She shuddered; but, each vainer pang subdued,
Quick disentangling from the foremost horse
The rustic bands, with difficulty and toil
The stiff cramped team forced homeward. There arrived,
Anxiously tends him she with healing herbs,
And weeps and prays—but the numb power of Death
Spreads o'er his limbs; and ere the noontide hour,
The hovering spirits of his wife and babes
Hail him immortal! Yet amid his pangs,
With interruptions long from ghastly throes,
His voice had faltered out this simple tale.

The village, where he dwelt a husbandman,
By sudden inroad had been seized and fired
Late on the yester-evening. With his wife
And little ones he hurried his escape.
They saw the neighbouring hamlets flame, they heard
Uproar and shrieks! and terror-struck drove on
Through unfrequented roads, a weary way!
But saw nor house nor cottage. All had quenched
Their evening hearth-fire: for the alarm had spread.
The air clipped keen, the night was fanged with frost,
And they provisionless! The weeping wife
Ill hushed her children's moans; and still they moaned,
Till fright and cold and hunger drank their life.
They closed their eyes in sleep, nor knew 'twas death.
He only, lashing his o'er-wearied team,
Gained a sad respite, till beside the base
Of the high hill his foremost horse dropped dead.
Then hopeless, strengthless, sick for lack of food,
He crept beneath the coverture, entranced,
Till wakened by the Maiden.—Such his tale.

Ah! suffering to the height of what was suffered,
Stung with too keen a sympathy, the Maid
Brooded with moving lips, mute, startful, dark!
And now her flushed tumultuous features shot
Such strange vivacity, as fires the eye
Of misery fancy-crazed! and now once more
Naked, and void, and fixed, and all within
The unquiet silence of confused thought
And shapeless feelings. For a mighty hand
Was strong upon her, till in the heat of soul
To the high hill-top tracing back her steps,
Aside the beacon, up whose smouldered stones
The tender ivy-trails crept thinly, there,
Unconscious of the driving element,
Yea, swallowed up in the ominous dream, she sate
Ghastly as broad-eyed Slumber! a dim anguish
Breathed from her look! and still with pant and sob,
Inly she toil'd to flee, and still subdued,
Felt an inevitable Presence near.

Thus as she toiled in troublous ecstasy,
A horror of great darkness wrapt her round,
And a voice uttered forth unearthly tones,
Calming her soul,—"O Thou of the Most High
Chosen, whom all the perfected in Heaven
Behold expectant——

[The following fragments were intended to form part of the poem when finished.]

"Maid beloved of Heaven!
(To her the tutelary Power exclaimed)
Of Chaos the adventurous progeny
Thou seest; foul missionaries of foul sire,

Fierce to regain the losses of that hour
When Love rose glittering, and his gorgeous wings
Over the abyss fluttered with such glad noise,
As what time after long and pestful calms,
With slimy shapes and miscreated life
Poisoning the vast Pacific, the fresh breeze
Wakens the merchant-sail uprising. Night
A heavy unimaginable moan
Sent forth, when she the Protoplast beheld
Stand beauteous on confusion's charmed wave.
Moaning she fled, and entered the Profound
That leads with downward windings to the cave
Of darkness palpable, desert of Death
Sunk deep beneath Gehenna's massy roots.
There many a dateless age the beldam lurked
And trembled; till engendered by fierce Hate,
Fierce Hate and gloomy Hope, a Dream arose,
Shaped like a black cloud marked with streaks of fire.
It roused the Hell-Hag: she the dew damp wiped
From off her brow, and through the uncouth maze
Retraced her steps; but ere she reached the mouth
Of that drear labyrinth, shuddering she paused,
Nor dared re-enter the diminished Gulf.
As through the dark vaults of some mouldered tower
(Which, fearful to approach, the evening hind
Circles at distance in his homeward way)
The winds breathe hollow, deemed the plaining groan
Of prisoned spirits; with such fearful voice
Night murmured, and the sound thro' Chaos went.
Leaped at her call her hideous-fronted brood!
A dark behest they heard, and rushed on earth;
Since that sad hour, in camps and courts adored,
Rebels from God, and tyrants o'er Mankind!"

From his obscure haunt
Shrieked Fear, of Cruelty the ghastly dam,
Feverous yet freezing, eager-paced yet slow,
As she that creeps from forth her swampy reeds,
Ague, the biform hag! when early Spring
Beams on the marsh-bred vapours.

"Even so (the exulting Maiden said)
The sainted heralds of good tidings fell,
And thus they witnessed God! But now the clouds
Treading, and storms beneath their feet, they soar
Higher, and higher soar, and soaring sing
Loud songs of triumph! O ye spirits of God,
Hover around my mortal agonies!"
She spake, and instantly faint melody
Melts on her ear, soothing and sad, and slow,
Such measures, as at calmest midnight heard
By aged hermit in his holy dream,
Foretell and solace death; and now they rise
Louder, as when with harp and mingled voice
The white-robed* multitude of slaughtered saints
At Heaven's wide-opened portals gratulant
Receive some martyr'd patriot. The harmony
Entranced the Maid, till each suspended sense
Brief slumber seized, and confused ecstasy.

* Revelations, vi. 9, 11. And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

At length awakening slow, she gazed around:
And through a mist, the relique of that trance
Still thinning as she gazed, an Isle appeared,
Its high, o'er-hanging, white, broad-breasted cliffs,
Glassed on the subject ocean. A vast plain
Stretched opposite, where ever and anon
The plough-man following sad his meagre team
Turned up fresh sculls unstartled, and the bones
Of fierce hate-breathing combatants, who there
All mingled lay beneath the common earth,
Death's gloomy reconcilement! O'er the fields
Stept a fair Form, repairing all she might,
Her temples olive-wreathed; and where she trod,
Fresh flowerets rose, and many a foodful herb.
But wan her cheek, her footsteps insecure,
And anxious pleasure beamed in her faint eye,
As she had newly left a couch of pain,
Pale convalescent! (yet some time to rule
With power exclusive o'er the willing world,
That blest prophetic mandate then fulfilled—
Peace be on Earth!) A happy while, but brief,
She seemed to wander with assiduous feet,
And healed the recent harm of chill and blight,
And nursed each plant that fair and virtuous grew.

But soon a deep precursive sound moaned hollow:
Black rose the clouds, and now, (as in a dream)
Their reddening shapes, transformed to warrior-hosts,
Coursed o'er the sky, and battled in mid-air.
Nor did not the large blood-drops fall from heaven
Portentous! while aloft were seen to float,
Like hideous features booming on the mist,
Wan stains of ominous light! Resigned, yet sad,

The fair Form bowed her olive-crowned brow,
Then o'er the plain with oft reverted eye
Fled till a place of tombs she reached, and there
Within a ruined sepulchre obscure
Found hiding-place.

The delegated Maid
Gazed through her tears, then in sad tones exclaimed,—
"Thou mild-eyed Form! wherefore, ah! wherefore fled?
The power of Justice like a name all light,
Shone from thy brow; but all they, who unblamed
Dwelt in thy dwellings, call thee Happiness.
Ah! why, uninjured and unprofited,
Should multitudes against their brethren rush?
Why sow they guilt, still reaping misery?
Lenient of care, thy songs, O Peace! are sweet,
As after showers the perfumed gale of eve,
That flings the cool drops on a feverous cheek;
And gay thy grassy altar piled with fruits.
But boasts the shrine of demon War one charm,
Save that with many an orgie strange and foul,
Dancing around with interwoven arms,
The maniac Suicide and giant Murder
Exult in their fierce union! I am sad,
And know not why the simple peasants crowd
Beneath the Chieftains' standard!" Thus the Maid.

To her the tutelary Spirit said:
"When luxury and lust's exhausted stores
No more can rouse the appetites of kings;
When the low flattery of their reptile lords
Falls flat and heavy on the accustomed ear;
When eunuchs sing, and fools buffoonery make,

And dancers writhe their harlot-limbs in vain;
Then War and all its dread vicissitudes
Pleasingly agitate their stagnant hearts;
Its hopes, its fears, its victories, its defeats,
Insipid royalty's keen condiment!
Therefore uninjured and unprofited,
(Victims at once and executioners)
The congregated husbandmen lay waste
The vineyard and the harvest. As along
The Bothnic coast, or southward of the Line,
Though hushed the winds and cloudless the high noon,
Yet if Leviathan, weary of ease,
In sports unwieldy toss his island-bulk,
Ocean behind him billows, and before
A storm of waves breaks foamy on the strand.
And hence, for times and seasons bloody and dark,
Short Peace shall skin the wounds of causeless War,
And War, his strained sinews knit anew,
Still violate the unfinished works of Peace.
But yonder look! for more demands thy view!"
He said: and straightway from the opposite Isle
A vapour sailed, as when a cloud, exhaled
From Egypt's fields that steam hot pestilence,
Travels the sky for many a trackless league,
Till o'er some death-doomed land, distant in vain,
It broods incumbent. Forthwith from the plain,
Facing the Isle, a brighter cloud arose,
And steered its course which way the vapour went.

The Maiden paused, musing what this might mean.
But long time passed not, ere that brighter cloud
Returned more bright; along the plain it swept;
And soon from forth its bursting sides emerged

A dazzling form, broad-bosomed, bold of eye,
And wild her hair, save where with laurels bound.
Not more majestic stood the healing God,
When from his bow the arrow sped that slew
Huge Python. Shriek'd Ambition's giant throng,
And with them hissed the locust-fiends that crawled
And glittered in Corruption's slimy track.
Great was their wrath, for short they knew their reign;
And such commotion made they, and uproar,
As when the mad tornado bellows through
The guilty islands of the western main,
What time departing from their native shores,
Eboe, or * Koromantyn's plain of palms,
The infuriate spirits of the murdered make
Fierce merriment, and vengeance ask of Heaven.
Warmed with new influence, the unwholesome plain

* The Slaves in the West Indies consider death as a passport to their native country. This sentiment is thus expressed in the introduction to a Greek Prize-Ode on the Slave-Trade, of which the thoughts are better than the language in which they are conveyed.

Ὦ σκότου πύλας, Θάνατε, προλείπων
Ἐς γένος σπεύδοις ὑποζευχθὲν Ἄτᾳ·
Οὐ ξενισθήσῃ γενύων σπαραγμοῖς,
Οὐδ' ὀλολύγμῳ,

Ἀλλὰ καὶ κύκλοισι χοροιτύποισι,
Κ'ἀσμάτων χαρᾷ· φοβερὸς μὲν ἐσσί,
Ἀλλ' δμῶς Ἐλευθερία συνοικεῖς,
Στυγνὲ Τύραννε!

Δασκίοις ἐπὶ πτερύγεσσι σῇσι
Ἆ! θαλάσσιον καθορῶντες οἶδμα
Αἰθεροπλάγκτοις ὑπὸ ποσσ' ἀνεῖσι
Πατρίδ' ἐπ' αἶαν.

Sent up its foulest fogs to meet the morn:
The Sun that rose on Freedom, rose in blood!

"Maiden beloved, and Delegate of Heaven!
(To her the tutelary Spirit said)
Soon shall the morning struggle into day,
The stormy morning into cloudless noon.
Much hast thou seen, nor all canst understand—
But this be thy best omen—Save thy Country!"
Thus saying, from the answering Maid he passed,
And with him disappeared the heavenly Vision.

"Glory to Thee, Father of Earth and Heaven!
All conscious presence of the Universe!
Nature's vast ever-acting energy!
In will, in deed, impulse of All to All!
Whether thy Love with unrefracted ray
Beam on the Prophet's purged eye, or if
Diseasing realms the enthusiast, wild of thought,
Scatter new frenzies on the infected throng,
Thou both inspiring and predooming both,

---

*Ἔνθα μὰν Ἐρασταὶ Ἐρωμενῆσιν
Ἀμφὶ πηγῆσιν κιτρίνων ὑπ' ἄλσων,
*Ὅσσ' ὑπὸ βροτοῖς ἔπαθον βροτοί, τὰ
Δεινὰ λέγοντι.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

* Leaving the gates of darkness, O Death! hasten thou to a race yoked with misery! Thou wilt not be received with lacerations of cheeks, nor with funeral ululation—but with circling dances and the joy of songs. Thou art terrible indeed, yet thou dwellest with Liberty, stern Genius! Borne on thy dark pinions over the swelling of Ocean, they return to their native country. There, by the side of fountains beneath citron-groves, the lovers tell to their beloved what horrors, being men, they had endured from men.

Fit instruments and best, of perfect end:
Glory to Thee, Father of Earth and Heaven!"

And first a landscape rose
More wild and waste and desolate than where
The white bear, drifting on a field of ice,
Howls to her sundered cubs with piteous rage
And savage agony.

POEMS WRITTEN IN EARLY MANHOOD, AND MIDDLE LIFE.

Facile credo, plures esse Naturas invisibiles quam visibiles in rerum universitate. Sed horum omnium familiam quis nobis enarrabit, et gradus et cognationes et discrimina et singulorum munera? Quid agunt? quæ loca habitant? Harum rerum notitiam semper ambivit ingenium humanum, nunquam attigit. Juvat, interea, non diffiteor, quandoque in animo, tanquam in tabulâ, majoris et melioris mundi imaginem contemplari: ne mens assuefacta hodiernæ vitæ minutiis se contrahat nimis, et tota subsidat in pusillas cogitationes. Sed veritati interea invigilandum est, modusque servandus, ut certa ab incertis, diem a nocte, distinguamus.—T. Burnet. Archæol. Phil. p. 68.

THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.*

IN SEVEN PARTS.

PART I.

It is an ancient Mariner,
And he stoppeth one of three.
"By thy long grey beard and glittering eye,
Now wherefore stopp'st thou me?

An ancient Mariner meeteth three gallants bidden to a wedding-feast, and detaineth one.

The Bridegroom's doors are opened wide,
And I am next of kin;
The guests are met, the feast is set:
May'st hear the merry din."

He holds him with his skinny hand,
"There was a ship," quoth he.
"Hold off! unhand me, grey-beard loon!"
Eftsoons his hand dropt he.

He holds him with his glittering eye—
The Wedding-Guest stood still,
And listens like a three year's child:
The Mariner hath his will.

The Wedding-Guest is spellbound by the eye of the old seafaring man, and constrained to hear his tale.

* See Note.

The Wedding-Guest sat on a stone:
He cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

"The ship was cheered, the harbour cleared,
Merrily did we drop
Below the kirk, below the hill,
Below the light-house top.

The Mariner tells how the ship sailed southward with a good wind and fair weather, till it reached the line.

The sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea.

Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—"
The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.

The Wedding-Guest heareth the bridal music; but the Mariner continueth his tale.

The bride hath paced into the hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry minstrelsy.

The Wedding-Guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot choose but hear;
And thus spake on that ancient man,
The bright-eyed Mariner.

The ship drawn by a storm toward the south pole.

"And now the storm-blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong:
He struck with his o'ertaking wings,
And chased us south along.

With sloping masts and dipping prow,
As who pursued with yell and blow
Still treads the shadow of his foe,
And forward bends his head,
The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.

And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald.

The land of ice, and of fearful sounds where no living thing was to be seen.

And through the drifts the snowy cliffs
Did send a dismal sheen:
Nor shapes of men nor beasts we ken—
The ice was all between.

The ice was here, the ice was there,
The ice was all around:
It cracked and growled, and roared and howled,
Like noises in a swound!

Till a great sea-bird, called the Albatross, came through the snow-fog, and was received with great joy and hospitality.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Through the fog it came;
As if it had been a Christian soul,
We hailed it in God's name.

It ate the food it ne'er had eat,
And round and round it flew.
The ice did split with a thunder-fit;
The helmsman steered us through!

And lo! the Albatross proveth a

And a good south wind sprung up behind;
The Albatross did follow,

Bird of good omen, and followeth the ship as it returned northward through fog and floating ice.

And every day, for food or play,
Came to the mariners' hollo!

In mist or cloud, on mast or shroud,
It perched for vespers nine;
Whiles all the night, through fog-smoke white,
Glimmered the white moon-shine."

The ancient Mariner inhospitably killeth the pious bird of good omen.

"God save thee, ancient Mariner!
From the fiends, that plague thee thus!—
Why look'st thou so?"—"With my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

PART II.

The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet bird did follow,
Nor any day for food or play
Came to the mariners' hollo!

His shipmates cry out against the ancient Mariner, for killing the bird of good luck.

And I had done a hellish thing,
And it would work 'em woe:
For all averred, I had killed the bird
That made the breeze to blow.

Ah wretch! said they, the bird to slay,
That made the breeze to blow!

Nor dim nor red, like God's own head,
The glorious sun uprist:
Then all averred, I had killed the bird
That brought the fog and mist.
'Twas right, said they, such birds to slay
That bring the fog and mist.

But when the fog cleared off, they justify the same, and thus make themselves accomplices in the crime.

The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

The fair breeze continues; the ship enters the Pacific Ocean, and sails northward, even till it reaches the Line.

Down dropt the breeze, the sails dropt down,
'Twas sad as sad could be;
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the sea!

The ship hath been suddenly becalmed.

All in a hot and copper sky,
The bloody Sun, at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand,
No bigger than the Moon.

Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, nor breath nor motion;
As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, every where,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, every where,
Nor any drop to drink.

And the Albatross begins to be avenged.

The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea.

About, about, in reel and rout
The death-fires danced at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green, and blue and white.

A Spirit had followed them; one of the invisible inhabitants of this planet, neither departed souls nor angels; concerning whom the learned Jew, Josephus, and the Platonic Constantinopolitan, Michael Psellus, may be consulted. They are very numerous, and there is no climate or element without one or more.

And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so;
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the land of mist and snow.

And every tongue, through utter drought,
Was withered at the root;
We could not speak, no more than if
We had been choked with soot.

The ship-mates, in their sore distress, would fain throw the whole guilt on the ancient Mariner: in sign whereof they hang the dead sea-bird round his neck.

Ah! well a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young!
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck was hung.

PART III.

THERE passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye,
When looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky.

The ancient Mariner beholdeth a sign in the element afar off.

At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.

A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it neared and neared:
As if it dodged a water-sprite,
It plunged and tacked and veered.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
We could nor laugh nor wail;
Through utter drought all dumb we stood!
I bit my arm, I sucked the blood,
And cried, A sail! a sail!

At its nearer approach, it seemeth him to be a ship; and at a dear ransom he freeth his speech from the bonds of thirst.

With throats unslaked, with black lips baked,
Agape they heard me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin,
And all at once their breath drew in,
As they were drinking all.

A flash of joy;

And horror follows. For can it be a *ship* that comes onward without wind or tide?

See! see! (I cried) she tacks no more!
Hither to work us weal,—
Without a breeze, without a tide,
She steadies with upright keel!

The western wave was all a-flame.
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.

It seemeth him but the skeleton of a ship.

And straight the Sun was flecked with bars,
(Heaven's Mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peered
With broad and burning face.

Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she nears and nears!
Are those her sails that glance in the Sun,
Like restless gossameres?

And its ribs are seen as bars on the face of the setting Sun. The Spectre-Woman and her Death-mate, and no other on board the skeleton-ship.

Are those her ribs through which the Sun
Did peer, as through a grate?
And is that Woman all her crew?
Is that a Death? and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

Like vessel, like crew!

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold:
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The Night-mare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

The naked hulk alongside came,
And the twain were casting dice;
'The game is done! I've won! I've won!'
Quoth she, and whistles thrice.

Death and Life-in-Death have diced for the ship's crew, and she (the latter) winneth the ancient Mariner.

The Sun's rim dips; the stars rush out:
At one stride comes the dark;
With far-heard whisper, o'er the sea,
Off shot the spectre-bark.

No twilight within the courts of the Sun.

We listened and looked sideways up!
Fear at my heart, as at a cup,
My life-blood seemed to sip!
The stars were dim, and thick the night,
The steersman's face by his lamp gleamed white;
From the sails the dew did drip—
Till clomb above the eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright star
Within the nether tip.

At the rising of the Moon.

One after one, by the star-dogged Moon,
Too quick for groan or sigh,
Each turned his face with a ghastly pang,
And cursed me with his eye.

One after another,

Four times fifty living men,
(And I heard nor sigh nor groan)
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
They dropped down one by one.

His shipmates drop down dead.

The souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe!
And every soul, it passed me by,
Like the whizz of my cross-bow!"

But Life-in-Death begins her work on the ancient Mariner.

PART IV.

The Wedding-Guest feareth that a Spirit is talking to him.

"I FEAR thee, ancient Mariner!
I fear thy skinny hand!
And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
As is the ribbed sea-sand.*

I fear thee and thy glittering eye,
And thy skinny hand, so brown."—

But the ancient Mariner assureth him of his bodily life, and proceedeth to relate his horrible penance.

"Fear not, fear not, thou Wedding-Guest!
This body dropped not down.

Alone, alone, all, all alone,
Alone on a wide wide sea!
And never a saint took pity on
My soul in agony.

He despiseth the creatures of the calm.

The many men, so beautiful!
And they all dead did lie:
And a thousand thousand slimy things
Lived on; and so did I.

And envieth that they should live, and so many lie dead.

I looked upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I looked upon the rotting deck,
And there the dead men lay.

* For the last two lines of this stanza, I am indebted to Mr. Wordsworth. It was on a delightful walk from Nether Stowey to Dulverton, with him and his sister, in the autumn of 1797, that this poem was planned, and in part composed.

I looked to Heaven, and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came, and made
My heart as dry as dust.

I closed my lids, and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet.

But the curse liveth for him in the eye of the dead men.

The cold sweat melted from their limbs,
Nor rot nor reek did they:
The look with which they looked on me
Had never passed away.

An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high;
But oh! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead man's eye!
Seven days, seven nights, I saw that curse,
And yet I could not die.

In his loneliness and fixedness he yearneth towards the journeying Moon, and the stars that still sojourn, yet still move onward; and every where the blue sky belongs to them, and is their appointed rest, and their native country and their own natural homes, which they enter unannounced, as lords that are certainly expected, and yet there is a silent joy at their arrival.

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide:
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemocked the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;

But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

By the light of the Moon he beholdeth God's creatures of the great calm.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watched the water-snakes:
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watched their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coiled and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

Their beauty and their happiness.

O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushed from my heart,

He blesseth them in his heart.

And I blessed them unaware:
Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
And I blessed them unaware.

The spell begins to break.

The selfsame moment I could pray,
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.

PART V.

Oh sleep! it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary Queen the praise be given!
She sent the gentle sleep from Heaven,
That slid into my soul.

The silly buckets on the deck,
That had so long remained,
I dreamt that they were filled with dew;
And when I awoke, it rained.

By grace of the holy Mother, the ancient Mariner is refreshed with rain.

My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams,
And still my body drank.

I moved, and could not feel my limbs:
I was so light—almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed ghost.

And soon I heard a roaring wind:
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails,
That were so thin and sere.

He heareth sounds and seeth strange sights and commotions in the sky and the element.

The upper air burst into life!
And a hundred fire-flags sheen,

To and fro they were hurried about!
And to and fro, and in and out,
The wan stars danced between.

And the coming wind did roar more loud,
And the sails did sigh like sedge;
And the rain poured down from one black cloud;
The Moon was at its edge.

The thick black cloud was cleft, and still
The Moon was at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning fell with never a jag,
A river steep and wide.

The bodies of the ship's crew are inspired, and the ship moves on;

The loud wind never reached the ship,
Yet now the ship moved on!
Beneath the lightning and the Moon
The dead men gave a groan.

They groaned, they stirred, they all uprose,
Nor spake, nor moved their eyes;
It had been strange, even in a dream,
To have seen those dead men rise.

The helmsman steered, the ship moved on;
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.

The body of my brother's son
Stood by me, knee to knee:

The body and I pulled at one rope,
But he said nought to me."

"I fear thee, ancient Mariner!"
"Be calm, thou Wedding-Guest!
'Twas not those souls that fled in pain,
Which to their corses came again,
But a troop of spirits blest:

But not by the souls of the men, nor by demons of earth or middle air, but by a blessed troop of angelic spirits, sent down by the invocation of the guardian saint.

For when it dawned—they dropped their arms,
And clustered round the mast;
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths,
And from their bodies passed.

Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the Sun;
Slowly the sounds came back again,
Now mixed, now one by one.

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
I heard the sky-lark sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are,
How they seemed to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
Now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song,
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook

In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Till noon we quietly sailed on,
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship,
Moved onward from beneath.

The lonesome Spirit rom the south-pole carries on the ship as far as the Line, in obedience to the angelic troop, but still requireth vengeance.

Under the keel nine fathom deep,
From the land of mist and snow,
The spirit slid: and it was he
That made the ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune,
And the ship stood still also.

The Sun, right up above the mast,
Had fixed her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir,
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.

Then like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head,
And I fell down in a swound.

The Polar Spirit's fellow demons, the invisible inhabitants of the element, take part in his wrong; and two of

How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life returned,
I heard, and in my soul discerned
Two voices in the air.

'Is it he?' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
By him who died on cross,
With his cruel bow he laid full low
The harmless Albatross.

them relate, one to the other, that penance long and heavy for the ancient Mariner hath been accorded to the Polar Spirit, who returneth southward.

The spirit who bideth by himself
In the land of mist and snow,
He loved the bird that loved the man
Who shot him with his bow.'

The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he, 'The man hath penance done,
And penance more will do.'

PART VI.

FIRST VOICE.

'But tell me, tell me! speak again,
Thy soft response renewing—
What makes that ship drive on so fast?
What is the ocean doing?

SECOND VOICE.

'Still as a slave before his lord,
The ocean hath no blast;
His great bright eye most silently
Up to the Moon is cast—

If he may know which way to go;
For she guides him smooth or grim.
See, brother, see! how graciously
She looketh down on him.'

FIRST VOICE.

The Mariner hath been cast into a trance; for the angelic power causeth the vessel to drive northward faster than human life could endure.

'But why drives on that ship so fast,
Without or wave or wind?'

SECOND VOICE.

'The air is cut away before,
And closes from behind.

Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high!
Or we shall be belated:
For slow and slow that ship will go,
When the Mariner's trance is abated.'

The supernatural motion is retarded; the Mariner awakes, and his penance begins anew.

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fixed on me their stony eyes,
That in the Moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs,
Nor turn them up to pray.

The curse is finally expiated.

And now this spell was snapt: once more
I viewed the ocean green,

And looked far forth, yet little saw
Of what had else been seen—

Like one, that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round walks on,
And turns no more his head;
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breathed a wind on me,
Nor sound nor motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea,
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fanned my cheek
Like a meadow-gale of spring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly flew the ship,
Yet she sailed softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh! dream of joy! is this indeed
The light-house top I see?
Is this the hill? is this the kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

And the ancient Mariner beholdeth his native country.

We drifted o'er the harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
O let me be awake, my God!
O let me sleep alway.

The harbour-bay was clear as glass,
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moonlight lay,
And the shadow of the Moon.

The rock shone bright, the kirk no less,
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steeped in silentness
The steady weathercock.

And the bay was white with silent light
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.

The angelic spirits leave the dead bodies,

And appear in their own forms of light.

A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turned my eyes upon the deck—
Oh, Christ! what saw I there!

Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And, by the holy rood!
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.

This seraph-band, each waved his hand
It was a heavenly sight!
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light;

This seraph-band, each waved his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but oh! the silence sank
Like music on my heart.

But soon I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the Pilot's cheer;
My head was turned perforce away,
And I saw a boat appear.

The Pilot and the Pilot's boy,
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy
The dead men could not blast.

I saw a third—I heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrieve my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.

PART VII.

The Hermit of the wood,

This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with marineres
That come from a far countree.

He kneels at morn, and noon, and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss that wholly hides
The rotted old oak-stump.

The skiff-boat neared: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
Where are those lights so many and fair,
That signal made but now?'

Approacheth the ship with wonder.

'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer!
The planks looked warped! and see those sails,
How thin they are and sere!
I never saw aught like to them,
Unless perchance it were

Brown skeletons of leaves that lag
My forest-brook along;
When the ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
And the owlet whoops to the wolf below,
That eats the she-wolf's young.'

'Dear Lord! it hath a fiendish look—
(The Pilot made reply)
I am a-feared'—'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.

The boat came closer to the ship,
But I nor spake nor stirred;
The boat came close beneath the ship,
And straight a sound was heard.

The ship suddenly sinketh.

Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reached the ship, it split the bay;
The ship went down like lead.

Stunned by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote,
Like one that hath been seven days drowned
My body lay afloat;
But swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.

The ancient Mariner is saved in the Pilot's boat.

Upon the whirl, where sank the ship,
The boat spun round and round;
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.
I moved my lips—the Pilot shrieked
And fell down in a fit;
The holy hermit raised his eyes,
And prayed where he did sit.

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laughed loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro.
'Ha! ha!' quoth he, 'full plain I see,
The Devil knows how to row.'

And now, all in my own countree,
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepped forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.

O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy man!
The Hermit crossed his brow.
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say—
What manner of man art thou?'

The ancient Mariner earnestly entreateth the Hermit to shrieve him; and the penance of life falls on him.

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

And ever and anon throughout his future life an agony constraineth him to travel from land to land.

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns:
And till my ghastly tale is told,
This heart within me burns.

I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
That moment that his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me:
To him my tale I teach.

What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The wedding-guests are there:
But in the garden-bower the bride
And bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little vesper bell,
Which biddeth me to prayer!

O Wedding-Guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.

O sweeter than the marriage-feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me,
To walk together to the kirk
With a goodly company!—

To walk together to the kirk,
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And youths and maidens gay!

Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou Wedding-Guest!
He prayeth well, who loveth well
Both man and bird and beast.

And to teach by his own example love and reverence to all things that God made and loveth.

He prayeth best, who loveth best
All things both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all."

The Mariner, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone: and now the Wedding-Guest
Turned from the bridegroom's door.

He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.

1797.

CHRISTABEL.

PREFACE.*

The first part of the following poem was written in the year 1797, at Stowey, in the county of Somerset. The second part, after my return from Germany, in the year 1800, at Keswick, Cumberland. It is probable, that if the poem had been finished at either of the former periods, or if even the first and second part had been published in the year 1800, the impression of its originality would have been much greater than I dare at present expect. But for this, I have only my own indolence to blame. The dates are mentioned for the exclusive purpose of precluding charges of plagiarism or servile imitation from myself. For there is amongst us a set of critics, who seem to hold, that every possible thought and image is traditional; who have no notion that there are such things as fountains in the world, small as well as great; and who would therefore charitably derive every rill they behold flowing, from a perforation made in some other man's tank. I am confident, however, that as far as the present poem is concerned, the celebrated poets whose writings I might be suspected of having imitated, either in particular passages, or in the tone and the spirit of the whole, would be among the first to vindicate me from the charge, and who, on any striking coincidence, would permit me to address them in this doggerel version of two monkish Latin hexameters.

'Tis mine and it is likewise yours;
But an if this will not do;
Let it be mine, good friend! for I
Am the poorer of the two.

I have only to add, that the metre of the Christabel is not, properly speaking, irregular, though it may seem so from its

* To the edition of 1816.

being founded on a new principle: namely, that of counting in each line the accents, not the syllables. Though the latter may vary from seven to twelve, yet in each line the accents will be found to be only four. Nevertheless this occasional variation in number of syllables is not introduced wantonly, or for the mere ends of convenience, but in correspondence with some transition, in the nature of the imagery or passion.

PART I.

'Tis the middle of night by the castle clock,
And the owls have awakened the crowing cock;
Tu—whit!——Tu—whoo!
And hark, again! the crowing cock,
How drowsily it crew.

Sir Leoline, the Baron rich,
Hath a toothless mastiff bitch;
From her kennel beneath the rock
She maketh answer to the clock,
Four for the quarters, and twelve for the hour,
Ever and aye, by shine and shower,
Sixteen short howls, not over loud;
Some say, she sees my lady's shroud.

Is the night chilly and dark?
The night is chilly, but not dark.
The thin gray cloud is spread on high,
It covers but not hides the sky.
The moon is behind, and at the full;
And yet she looks both small and dull.

The night is chill, the cloud is gray:
'Tis a month before the month of May,
And the Spring comes slowly up this way.

The lovely lady, Christabel,
Whom her father loves so well,
What makes her in the wood so late,
A furlong from the castle gate?
She had dreams all yesternight
Of her own betrothed knight;
And she in the midnight wood will pray
For the weal of her lover that's far away.

She stole along, she nothing spoke,
The sighs she heaved were soft and low,
And naught was green upon the oak,
But moss and rarest misletoe:
She kneels beneath the huge oak tree,
And in silence prayeth she.

The lady sprang up suddenly,
The lovely lady, Christabel!
It moaned as near, as near can be,
But what it is, she cannot tell.—
On the other side it seems to be,
Of the huge, broad-breasted, old oak tree.

The night is chill; the forest bare;
Is it the wind that moaneth bleak?
There is not wind enough in the air
To move away the ringlet curl
From the lovely lady's cheek—
There is not wind enough to twirl

The one red leaf, the last of its clan,
That dances as often as dance it can,
Hanging so light, and hanging so high,
On the topmost twig that looks up at the sky.

Hush, beating heart of Christabel!
Jesu, Maria, shield her well!
She folded her arms beneath her cloak,
And stole to the other side of the oak.
What sees she there?

There she sees a damsel bright,
Drest in a silken robe of white,
That shadowy in the moonlight shone:
The neck that made that white robe wan,
Her stately neck, and arms were bare;
Her blue-veined feet unsandal'd were,
And wildly glittered here and there
The gems entangled in her hair.
I guess, 'twas frightful there to see
A lady so richly clad as she—
Beautiful exceedingly!

Mary mother, save me now!
(Said Christabel,) And who art thou?

The lady strange made answer meet,
And her voice was faint and sweet:—
Have pity on my sore distress,
I scarce can speak for weariness:
Stretch forth thy hand, and have no fear!
Said Christabel, How camest thou here?

And the lady, whose voice was faint and sweet,
Did thus pursue her answer meet:—

My sire is of a noble line,
And my name is Geraldine:
Five warriors seized me yestermorn,
Me, even me, a maid forlorn:
They choked my cries with force and fright,
And tied me on a palfrey white.
The palfrey was as fleet as wind,
And they rode furiously behind.
They spurred amain, their steeds were white:
And once we crossed the shade of night.
As sure as Heaven shall rescue me,
I have no thought what men they be;
Nor do I know how long it is
(For I have lain entranced I wis)
Since one, the tallest of the five,
Took me from the palfrey's back,
A weary woman, scarce alive.
Some muttered words his comrades spoke:
He placed me underneath this oak;
He swore they would return with haste;
Whither they went I cannot tell—
I thought I heard, some minutes past,
Sounds as of a castle bell.
Stretch forth thy hand (thus ended she),
And help a wretched maid to flee.

Then Christabel stretched forth her hand
And comforted fair Geraldine:
O well, bright dame! may you command
The service of Sir Leoline;

And gladly our stout chivalry
Will he send forth and friends withal
To guide and guard you safe and free
Home to your noble father's hall.

She rose: and forth with steps they passed
That strove to be, and were not, fast.
Her gracious stars the lady blest,
And thus spake on sweet Christabel:
All our household are at rest,
The hall as silent as the cell:
Sir Leoline is weak in health,
And may not well awakened be,
But we will move as if in stealth,
And I beseech your courtesy,
This night to share your couch with me.

They crossed the moat, and Christabel
Took the key that fitted well;
A little door she opened straight,
All in the middle of the gate;
The gate that was ironed within and without,
Where an army in battle array had marched out.
The lady sank, belike through pain,
And Christabel with might and main
Lifted her up, a weary weight,
Over the threshold of the gate:
Then the lady rose again,
And moved, as she were not in pain.

So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.
And Christabel devoutly cried
To the Lady by her side;

Praise we the Virgin all divine
Who hath rescued thee from thy distress!
Alas, alas! said Geraldine,
I cannot speak for weariness.
So free from danger, free from fear,
They crossed the court: right glad they were.

Outside her kennel the mastiff old
Lay fast asleep, in moonshine cold.
The mastiff old did not awake,
Yet she an angry moan did make!
And what can ail the mastiff bitch?
Never till now she uttered yell
Beneath the eye of Christabel.
Perhaps it is the owlet's scritch:
For what can ail the mastiff bitch?

They passed the hall, that echoes still,
Pass as lightly as you will!
The brands were flat, the brands were dying,
Amid their own white ashes lying;
But when the lady passed, there came
A tongue of light, a fit of flame;
And Christabel saw the lady's eye,
And nothing else saw she thereby,
Save the boss of the shield of Sir Leoline tall,
Which hung in a murky old niche in the wall.
O softly tread, said Christabel,
My father seldom sleepeth well.

Sweet Christabel her feet doth bare,
And, jealous of the listening air,
They steal their way from stair to stair,

Now in glimmer, and now in gloom,
And now they pass the Baron's room,
As still as death with stifled breath!
And now have reached her chamber door;
And now doth Geraldine press down
The rushes of the chamber floor.

The moon shines dim in the open air,
And not a moonbeam enters here.
But they without its light can see
The chamber carved so curiously,
Carved with figures strange and sweet,
All made out of the carver's brain,
For a lady's chamber meet:
The lamp with twofold silver chain
Is fastened to an angel's feet.
The silver lamp burns dead and dim;
But Christabel the lamp will trim.
She trimmed the lamp, and made it bright,
And left it swinging to and fro,
While Geraldine, in wretched plight,
Sank down upon the floor below.

O weary lady, Geraldine,
I pray you, drink this cordial wine!
It is a wine of virtuous powers;
My mother made it of wild flowers.

And will your mother pity me,
Who am a maiden most forlorn?
Christabel answered—Woe is me!
She died the hour that I was born

I have heard the grey-haired friar tell,
How on her death-bed she did say,
That she should hear the castle-bell
Strike twelve upon my wedding-day.
O mother dear! that thou wert here!
I would, said Geraldine, she were!
But soon with altered voice, said she—
"Off, wandering mother! Peak and pine!
I have power to bid thee flee."
Alas! what ails poor Geraldine?
Why stares she with unsettled eye?
Can she the bodiless dead espy?
And why with hollow voice cries she,
"Off, woman, off!" this hour is mine—
Though thou her guardian spirit be,
Off, woman, off! 'tis given to me."

Then Christabel knelt by the lady's side,
And raised to heaven her eyes so blue—
Alas! said she, this ghastly ride—
Dear lady! it hath wildered you!
The lady wiped her moist cold brow,
And faintly said, "'tis over now!"

Again the wild-flower wine she drank:
Her fair large eyes 'gan glitter bright,
And from the floor whereon she sank,
The lofty lady stood upright;
She was most beautiful to see,
Like a lady of a far countrée.

And thus the lofty lady spake—
All they, who live in the upper sky,

Do love you, holy Christabel!
And you love them, and for their sake
And for the good which me befell,
Even I in my degree will try,
Fair maiden, to requite you well.
But now unrobe yourself; for I
Must pray, ere yet in bed I lie.

Quoth Christabel, so let it be!
And as the lady bade, did she.
Her gentle limbs did she undress,
And lay down in her loveliness.

But through her brain of weal and woe
So many thoughts moved to and fro,
That vain it were her lids to close;
So half-way from the bed she rose,
And on her elbow did recline
To look at the lady Geraldine.

Beneath the lamp the lady bowed,
And slowly rolled her eyes around;
Then drawing in her breath aloud
Like one that shuddered, she unbound
The cincture from beneath her breast:
Her silken robe, and inner vest,
Dropt to her feet, and full in view,
Behold! her bosom and half her side——
A sight to dream of, not to tell!
O shield her! shield sweet Christabel!

Yet Geraldine nor speaks nor stirs;
Ah! what a stricken look was hers!

Deep from within she seems half-way
To lift some weight with sick assay,
And eyes the maid and seeks delay:
Then suddenly as one defied
Collects herself in scorn and pride,
And lay down by the maiden's side!—
And in her arms the maid she took,
Ah well-a-day!
And with low voice and doleful look
These words did say:
In the touch of this bosom there worketh a spell
Which is lord of thy utterance, Christabel!
Thou knowest to-night, and wilt know to-morrow
This mark of my shame, this seal of my sorrow;
But vainly thou warrest,
For this is alone in
Thy power to declare,
That in the dim forest
Thou heard'st a low moaning,
And found'st a bright lady, surpassingly fair:
And didst bring her home with thee in love and in charity,
To shield her and shelter her from the damp air.

THE CONCLUSION TO PART I.

It was a lovely sight to see
The lady Christabel, when she
Was praying at the old oak tree.
Amid the jagged shadows
Of mossy leafless boughs,
Kneeling in the moonlight,
To make her gentle vows;
Her slender palms together prest.
Heaving sometimes on her breast;
Her face resigned to bliss or bale—
Her face, oh call it fair not pale,
And both blue eyes more bright than clear,
Each about to have a tear.

With open eyes (ah woe is me!)
Asleep, and dreaming fearfully,
Fearfully dreaming, yet I wis,
Dreaming that alone, which is—
O sorrow and shame! Can this be she,
The lady, who knelt at the old oak tree?
And lo! the worker of these harms,
That holds the maiden in her arms,
Seems to slumber still and mild,
As a mother with her child.

A star hath set, a star hath risen,
O Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.
O Geraldine! one hour was thine—

Thou'st had thy will! By tairn and rill,
The night-birds all that hour were still.
But now they are jubilant anew,
From cliff and tower, tu—whoo! tu—whoo!
Tu—whoo! tu—whoo! from wood and fell!
And see! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!
Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere?
What if she knew her mother near?
But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call:
For the blue sky bends over all!

PART II.

Each matin bell, the Baron saith,
Knells us back to a world of death.
These words Sir Leoline first said,
When he rose and found his lady dead:
These words Sir Leoline will say,
Many a morn to his dying day!

And hence the custom and law began,
That still at dawn the sacristan,
Who duly pulls the heavy bell,
Five and forty beads must tell
Between each stroke—a warning knell,
Which not a soul can choose but hear
From Bratha Head to Wyndermere.

Saith Bracy the bard, So let it knell!
And let the drowsy sacristan
Still count as slowly as he can!
There is no lack of such, I ween,
As well fill up the space between.
In Langdale Pike and Witch's Lair,
And Dungeon-ghyll so foully rent,
With ropes of rock and bells of air
Three sinful sextons' ghosts are pent,
Who all give back, one after t'other,
The death-note to their living brother;
And oft too, by the knell offended,
Just as their one! two! three! is ended,
The devil mocks the doleful tale
With a merry peal from Borodale.

The air is still! through mist and cloud
That merry peal comes ringing loud;
And Geraldine shakes off her dread,
And rises lightly from the bed;
Puts on her silken vestments white,
And tricks her hair in lovely plight,
And nothing doubting of her spell
Awakens the lady Christabel.
"Sleep you, sweet lady Christabel?
I trust that you have rested well."

And Christabel awoke and spied
The same who lay down by her side—
O rather say, the same whom she
Raised up beneath the old oak tree!
Nay, fairer yet! and yet more fair!
For she belike hath drunken deep
Of all the blessedness of sleep!
And while she spake, her looks, her air
Such gentle thankfulness declare,
That (so it seemed) her girded vests
Grew tight beneath her heaving breasts.
"Sure I have sinned!" said Christabel,
"Now heaven be praised if all be well!"
And in low faltering tones, yet sweet,
Did she the lofty lady greet
With such perplexity of mind
As dreams too lively leave behind.

So quickly she rose, and quickly arrayed
Her maiden limbs, and having prayed
That He, who on the cross did groan,
Might wash away her sins unknown,

She forthwith led fair Geraldine
To meet her sire, Sir Leoline.

The lovely maid and the lady tall
Are pacing both into the hall,
And pacing on through page and groom,
Enter the Baron's presence room.

The Baron rose, and while he prest
His gentle daughter to his breast,
With cheerful wonder in his eyes
The lady Geraldine espies,
And gave such welcome to the same,
As might beseem so bright a dame!

But when he heard the lady's tale,
And when she told her father's name,
Why waxed Sir Leoline so pale,
Murmuring o'er the name again,
Lord Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine?

Alas! they had been friends in youth;
But whispering tongues can poison truth;
And constancy lives in realms above;
And life is thorny; and youth is vain;
And to be wroth with one we love,
Doth work like madness in the brain.
And thus it chanced, as I divine,
With Roland and Sir Leoline.
Each spake words of high disdain
And insult to his heart's best brother:
They parted—ne'er to meet again!

But never either found another
To free the hollow heart from paining—
They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
Like cliffs which had been rent asunder;
A dreary sea now flows between;—
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The marks of that which once hath been.

Sir Leoline, a moment's space,
Stood gazing on the damsel's face:
And the youthful Lord of Tryermaine
Came back upon his heart again.

O then the Baron forgot his age,
His noble heart swelled high with rage;
He swore by the wounds in Jesu's side,
He would proclaim it far and wide
With trump and solemn heraldry,
That they who thus had wronged the dame,
Were base as spotted infamy!
"And if they dare deny the same,
My herald shall appoint a week,
And let the recreant traitors seek
My tourney court—that there and then
I may dislodge their reptile souls
From the bodies and forms of men!"
He spake: his eye in lightning rolls!
For the lady was ruthlessly seized; and he kenned
In the beautiful lady the child of his friend!

And now the tears were on his face,
And fondly in his arms he took

Fair Geraldine, who met the embrace,
Prolonging it with joyous look.
Which when she viewed, a vision fell
Upon the soul of Christabel,
The vision of fear, the touch and pain!
She shrunk and shuddered, and saw again—
(Ah, woe is me! Was it for thee,
Thou gentle maid! such sights to see?)
Again she saw that bosom old,
Again she felt that bosom cold,
And drew in her breath with a hissing sound:
Whereat the Knight turned wildly round,
And nothing saw, but his own sweet maid
With eyes upraised, as one that prayed.

The touch, the sight, had passed away,
And in its stead that vision blest,
Which comforted her after-rest,
While in the lady's arms she lay,
Had put a rapture in her breast,
And on her lips and o'er her eyes
Spread smiles like light!
With new surprise,
"What ails then my beloved child?"
The Baron said—His daughter mild
Made answer, "All will yet be well!"
I ween, she had no power to tell
Aught else: so mighty was the spell.

Yet he, who saw this Geraldine,
Had deemed her sure a thing divine.
Such sorrow with such grace she blended,
As if she feared, she had offended

Sweet Christabel, that gentle maid!
And with such lowly tones she prayed,
She might be sent without delay
Home to her father's mansion.
"Nay!
Nay, by my soul!" said Leoline.
"Ho! Bracy, the bard, the charge be thine!
Go thou, with music sweet and loud,
And take two steeds with trappings proud,
And take the youth whom thou lov'st best
To bear thy harp, and learn thy song,
And clothe you both in solemn vest,
And over the mountains haste along,
Lest wandering folk, that are abroad,
Detain you on the valley road.
And when he has crossed the Irthing flood,
My merry bard! he hastes, he hastes
Up Knorren Moor, through Halegerth Wood,
And reaches soon that castle good
Which stands and threatens Scotland's wastes.

"Bard Bracy! bard Bracy! your horses are fleet,
Ye must ride up the hall, your music so sweet,
More loud than your horses' echoing feet!
And loud and loud to Lord Roland call,
Thy daughter is safe in Langdale hall!
Thy beautiful daughter is safe and free—
Sir Leoline greets thee thus through me.
He bids thee come without delay
With all thy numerous array;
And take thy lovely daughter home:
And he will meet thee on the way
With all his numerous array

White with their panting palfreys' foam:
And by mine honour! I will say,
That I repent me of the day
When I spake words of fierce disdain
To Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine!—
—For since that evil hour hath flown,
Many a summer's sun hath shone;
Yet ne'er found I a friend again
Like Roland de Vaux of Tryermaine."

The lady fell, and clasped his knees,
Her face upraised, her eyes o'erflowing;
And Bracy replied, with faltering voice,
His gracious hail on all bestowing!—
"Thy words, thou sire of Christabel,
Are sweeter than my harp can tell;
Yet might I gain a boon of thee,
This day my journey should not be,
So strange a dream hath come to me;
That I had vowed with music loud
To clear yon wood from thing unblest,
Warned by a vision in my rest!
For in my sleep I saw that dove,
That gentle bird, whom thou dost love,
And call'st by thy own daughter's name—
Sir Leoline! I saw the same
Fluttering, and uttering fearful moan,
Among the green herbs in the forest alone.
Which when I saw and when I heard,
I wonder'd what might ail the bird;
For nothing near it could I see,
Save the grass and green herbs underneath the
old tree.

"And in my dream methought I went
To search out what might there be found;
And what the sweet bird's trouble meant,
That thus lay fluttering on the ground.
I went and peered, and could descry
No cause for her distressful cry;
But yet for her dear lady's sake
I stooped, methought, the dove to take,
When lo! I saw a bright green snake
Coiled around its wings and neck,
Green as the herbs on which it couched,
Close by the dove's its head it crouched;
And with the dove it heaves and stirs,
Swelling its neck as she swelled hers!
I woke; it was the midnight hour,
The clock was echoing in the tower;
But though my slumber was gone by,
This dream it would not pass away—
It seems to live upon my eye!
And thence I vowed this self-same day,
With music strong and saintly song
To wander through the forest bare,
Lest aught unholy loiter there."

Thus Bracy said; the Baron, the while,
Half-listening heard him with a smile;
Then turned to Lady Geraldine,
His eyes made up of wonder and love;
And said in courtly accents fine,
"Sweet maid, Lord Roland's beauteous dove,
With arms more strong than harp or song,
Thy sire and I will crush the snake!"
He kissed her forehead as he spake,

And Geraldine, in maiden wise,
Casting down her large bright eyes,
With blushing cheek and courtesy fine
She turned her from Sir Leoline;
Softly gathering up her train,
That o'er her right arm fell again;
And folded her arms across her chest,
And couched her head upon her breast,
And looked askance at Christabel——
Jesu Maria, shield her well!

A snake's small eye blinks dull and shy,
And the lady's eyes they shrunk in her head,
Each shrunk up to a serpent's eye,
And with somewhat of malice, and more of dread,
At Christabel she looked askance!—
One moment—and the sight was fled!
But Christabel in dizzy trance
Stumbling on the unsteady ground
Shuddered aloud, with a hissing sound;
And Geraldine again turned round,
And like a thing, that sought relief,
Full of wonder and full of grief,
She rolled her large bright eyes divine
Wildly on Sir Leoline.

The maid, alas! her thoughts are gone,
She nothing sees—no sight but one!
The maid, devoid of guile and sin,
I know not how, in fearful wise
So deeply had she drunken in
That look, those shrunken serpent eyes,
That all her features were resigned

To this sole image in her mind;
And passively did imitate
That look of dull and treacherous hate!
And thus she stood, in dizzy trance,
Still picturing that look askance
With forced unconscious sympathy
Full before her father's view——
As far as such a look could be,
In eyes so innocent and blue!
And when the trance was o'er, the maid
Paused awhile, and inly prayed:
Then falling at the Baron's feet,
"By my mother's soul do I entreat
That thou this woman send away!"
She said: and more she could not say:
For what she knew she could not tell,
O'er-mastered by the mighty spell.

Why is thy cheek so wan and wild,
Sir Leoline? Thy only child
Lies at thy feet, thy joy, thy pride,
So fair, so innocent, so mild;
The same, for whom thy lady died!
O by the pangs of her dear mother
Think thou no evil of thy child!
For her, and thee, and for no other,
She prayed the moment ere she died:
Prayed that the babe for whom she died,
Might prove her dear lord's joy and pride!
That prayer her deadly pangs beguiled,
Sir Leoline!
And wouldst thou wrong thy only child,
Her child and thine?

Within the Baron's heart and brain
If thoughts, like these, had any share,
They only swelled his rage and pain,
And did but work confusion there.
His heart was cleft with pain and rage,
His cheeks they quivered, his eyes were wild.
Dishonoured thus in his old age;
Dishonoured by his only child,
And all his hospitality
To the wrong'd daughter of his friend
By more than woman's jealousy
Brought thus to a disgraceful end—
He rolled his eye with stern regard
Upon the gentle minstrel bard,
And said in tones abrupt, austere—
"Why, Bracy! dost thou loiter here?
I bade thee hence!" The bard obeyed;
And turning from his own sweet maid,
The aged knight, Sir Leoline,
Led forth the lady Geraldine.

THE CONCLUSION TO PART II.

A LITTLE child, a limber elf,
Singing, dancing to itself,
A fairy thing with red round cheeks,
That always finds, and never seeks,
Makes such a vision to the sight
As fills a father's eyes with light;
And pleasures flow in so thick and fast
Upon his heart, that he at last

Must needs express his love's excess
With words of unmeant bitterness.
Perhaps 'tis pretty to force together
Thoughts so all unlike each other;
To mutter and mock a broken charm,
To dally with wrong that does no harm.
Perhaps 'tis tender too and pretty
At each wild word to feel within
A sweet recoil of love and pity.
And what, if in a world of sin
(O sorrow and shame should this be true!)
Such giddiness of heart and brain
Comes seldom save from rage and pain,
So talks as it's most used to do.

PART I., 1797.—PART II., 1800.

KUBLA KHAN; OR, A VISION IN A DREAM.

A FRAGMENT.

In the summer of the year 1797, the Author, then in ill health, had retired to a lonely farm-house between Porlock and Linton, on the Exmoor confines of Somerset and Devonshire. In consequence of a slight indisposition, an anodyne had been prescribed, from the effect of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment he was reading the following sentence, or words of the same substance, in "Purchas's Pilgrimage:"—"Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto: and thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall." The author continued for about three hours in a profound sleep, at least of the external senses, during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things, with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions, without any sensation or consciousness of effort. On awaking he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. At this moment he was unfortunately called out by a person on business from Porlock, and detained by him above an hour, and on his return to his room, found, to his no small surprise and mortification, that though he still retained some vague and dim recollection of the general purport of the vision, yet, with the exception of some eight or ten scattered lines and images, all the rest had passed away like the images on the surface of a stream into which a stone had been cast, but, alas! without the after restoration of the latter.

Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circles spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth! who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes—

The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays,
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror.

Yet from the still surviving recollections in his mind, the Author has frequently purposed to finish for himself what had been originally, as it were, given to him. Αὔριον ἄδιον ἄσω: but the to-morrow is yet to come.

1816.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:

And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean;
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!
A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise. 1797.

THE WANDERINGS OF CAIN.

PREFATORY NOTE.

A PROSE composition, one not in metre at least, seems *prima facie* to require explanation or apology. It was written in the year 1798, near Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, at which place (*sanctum et amabile nomen!* rich by so many associations and recollections) the author had taken up his residence in order to enjoy the society and close neighbourhood of a dear and honoured friend, T. Poole, Esq. The work was to have been written in concert with another, whose name is too venerable within the precincts of genius to be unnecessarily brought into connexion with such a trifle, and who was then residing at a small distance from Nether Stowey. The title and subject were suggested by myself, who likewise drew out the scheme and the contents for each of the three books or cantos, of which the work was to consist, and which, the reader is to be informed, was to have been finished in one night! My partner undertook the first canto: I the second: and whichever had done first, was to set about the third. Almost thirty years have passed by; yet at this moment I cannot without something more than a smile moot the question which of the two things was the more impracticable, for a mind so eminently original to compose another man's thoughts and fancies, or for a taste so austerely pure and simple to imitate the Death of Abel? Methinks I see his grand and noble countenance as at the moment when having despatched my own portion of the task at full finger-speed, I hastened to him with my manuscript—that look of humourous despondency fixed on his almost blank sheet of paper, and then its silent mock-piteous admission of failure struggling with the sense of the exceeding ridiculousness of the whole scheme—which broke up in a laugh: and the Ancient Mariner was written instead.

Years afterward, however, the draft of the plan and proposed incidents, and the portion executed, obtained favour in the eyes

of more than one person, whose judgment on a poetic work could not but have weighed with me, even though no parental partiality had been thrown into the same scale, as a make-weight: and I determined on commencing anew, and composing the whole in stanzas, and made some progress in realising this intention, when adverse gales drove my bark off the "Fortunate Isles" of the Muses: and then other and more momentous interests prompted a different voyage, to firmer anchorage and a securer port. I have in vain tried to recover the lines from the palimpsest tablet of my memory; and I can only offer the introductory stanza, which had been committed to writing for the purpose of procuring a friend's judgment on the metre, as a specimen.

Encinctured with a twine of leaves,
That leafy twine his only dress!
A lovely Boy was plucking fruits,
By moonlight, in a wilderness.
The moon was bright, the air was free,
And fruits and flowers together grew
On many a shrub and many a tree:
And all put on a gentle hue,
Hanging in the shadowy air
Like a picture rich and rare.
It was a climate where, they say,
The night is more belov'd than day.
But who that beauteous Boy beguil'd,
That beauteous Boy to linger here?
Alone, by night, a little child,
In place so silent and so wild—
Has he no friend, no loving mother near?

CANTO II.

"A LITTLE further, O my father, yet a little further, and we shall come into the open moonlight." Their road was through a forest of fir-trees; at its entrance the trees stood at distances from each other, and the path was broad, and the moonlight and the moonlight shadows reposed upon it, and appeared quietly to inhabit that solitude. But soon the path winded and became narrow; the sun at high noon sometimes speckled, but never illumined it, and now it was dark as a cavern.

"It is dark, O my father!" said Enos, "but the path under our feet is smooth and soft, and we shall soon come out into the open moonlight."

"Lead on, my child!" said Cain: "guide me, little child!" And the innocent little child clasped a finger of the hand which had murdered the righteous Abel, and he guided his father. "The fir branches drip upon thee, my son." "Yea, pleasantly, father, for I ran fast and eagerly to bring thee the pitcher and the cake, and my body is not yet cool. How happy the squirrels are that feed on these fir-trees! they leap from bough to bough, and the old squirrels play round their young ones in the nest. I clomb a tree yesterday at noon, O my father, that I might play with them, but they leaped away from the branches, even to the slender twigs did they leap, and in a moment I beheld them on another tree. Why, O my father, would they not play with me? I would be good to them as thou art good to me: and I groaned to them even as thou groanest when thou givest me to eat,

and when thou coverest me at evening, and as often as I stand at thy knee and thine eyes look at me?" Then Cain stopped, and stifling his groans he sank to the earth, and the child Enos stood in the darkness beside him.

And Cain lifted up his voice and cried bitterly, and said, "The Mighty One that persecuteth me is on this side and on that; he pursueth my soul like the wind, like the sand-blast he passeth through me; he is around me even as the air! O that I might be utterly no more! I desire to die—yea, the things that never had life, neither move they upon the earth—behold! they seem precious to mine eyes. O that a man might live without the breath of his nostrils. So I might abide in darkness, and blackness, and an empty space! Yea, I would lie down, I would not rise, neither would I stir my limbs till I became as the rock in the den of the lion, on which the young lion resteth his head whilst he sleepeth. For the torrent that roareth far off hath a voice: and the clouds in heaven look terribly on me; the Mighty One who is against me speaketh in the wind of the cedar grove; and in silence am I dried up." Then Enos spake to his father, "Arise, my father, arise, we are but a little way from the place where I found the cake and the pitcher." And Cain said, "How knowest thou?" and the child answered—"Behold the bare rocks are a few of thy strides distant from the forest; and while even now thou wert lifting up thy voice, I heard the echo." Then the child took hold of his father, as if he would raise him: and Cain being faint and feeble rose slowly on his knees and pressed himself against the trunk of a fir, and stood upright and followed the child.

The path was dark till within three strides' length of its termination, when it turned suddenly; the thick black trees formed a low arch, and the moonlight appeared for a moment like a dazzling portal. Enos ran before and stood in the open air; and when Cain, his father, emerged from the darkness, the child was affrighted. For the mighty limbs of Cain were wasted as by fire; his hair was as the matted curls on the bison's forehead, and so glared his fierce and sullen eye beneath: and the black abundant locks on either side, a rank and tangled mass, were stained and scorched, as though the grasp of a burning iron hand had striven to rend them; and his countenance told in a strange and terrible language of agonies that had been, and were, and were still to continue to be.

The scene around was desolate; as far as the eye could reach it was desolate: the bare rocks faced each other, and left a long and wide interval of thin white sand. You might wander on and look round and round, and peep into the crevices of the rocks and discover nothing that acknowledged the influence of the seasons. There was no spring, no summer, no autumn: and the winter's snow, that would have been lovely, fell not on these hot rocks and scorching sands. Never morning lark had poised himself over this desert; but the huge serpent often hissed there beneath the talons of the vulture, and the vulture screamed, his wings imprisoned within the coils of the serpent. The pointed and shattered summits of the ridges of the rocks made a rude mimicry of human concerns, and seemed to prophesy mutely of things that then were not; steeples, and battlements, and ships with naked masts. As far from the wood as a boy might sling a pebble of the brook,

there was one rock by itself at a small distance from the main ridge. It had been precipitated there perhaps by the groan which the Earth uttered when our first father fell. Before you approached, it appeared to lie flat on the ground, but its base slanted from its point, and between its point and the sands a tall man might stand upright. It was here that Enos had found the pitcher and cake, and to this place he led his father. But ere they had reached the rock they beheld a human shape: his back was towards them, and they were advancing unperceived, when they heard him smite his breast and cry aloud, "Woe is me! woe is me! I must never die again, and yet I am perishing with thirst and hunger."

Pallid, as the reflection of the sheeted lightning on the heavy-sailing night-cloud, became the face of Cain; but the child Enos took hold of the shaggy skin, his father's robe, and raised his eyes to his father, and listening whispered, "Ere yet I could speak, I am sure, O my father, that I heard that voice. Have not I often said that I remembered a sweet voice? O my father! this is it:" and Cain trembled exceedingly. The voice was sweet indeed, but it was thin and querulous, like that of a feeble slave in misery, who despairs altogether, yet can not refrain himself from weeping and lamentation. And, behold! Enos glided forward, and creeping softly round the base of the rock, stood before the stranger, and looked up into his face. And the Shape shrieked, and turned round, and Cain beheld him, that his limbs and his face were those of his brother Abel whom he had killed! And Cain stood like one who struggles in his sleep because of the exceeding terribleness of a dream.

Thus as he stood in silence and darkness of soul, the Shape fell at his feet, and embraced his knees, and cried out with a bitter outcry, "Thou eldest born of Adam, whom Eve, my mother, brought forth, cease to torment me! I was feeding my flocks in green pastures by the side of quiet rivers, and thou killedst me; and now I am in misery." Then Cain closed his eyes, and hid them with his hands; and again he opened his eyes, and looked around him, and said to Enos, "What beholdest thou? Didst thou hear a voice, my son?" "Yes, my father, I beheld a man in unclean garments, and he uttered a sweet voice, full of lamentation." Then Cain raised up the Shape that was like Abel, and said:—"The Creator of our father, who had respect unto thee, and unto thy offering, wherefore hath he forsaken thee?" Then the Shape shrieked a second time, and rent his garment, and his naked skin was like the white sands beneath their feet; and he shrieked yet a third time, and threw himself on his face upon the sand that was black with the shadow of the rock, and Cain and Enos sate beside him; the child by his right hand, and Cain by his left. They were all three under the rock, and within the shadow. The Shape that was like Abel raised himself up, and spake to the child: "I know where the cold waters are, but I may not drink, wherefore didst thou then take away my pitcher?" But Cain said, "Didst thou not find favour in the sight of the Lord thy God?" The Shape answered, "The Lord is God of the living only, the dead have another God." Then the child Enos lifted up his eyes and prayed; but Cain rejoiced secretly in his heart. "Wretched shall they be all the days of their mortal life," exclaimed the Shape, "who sacrifice worthy and acceptable

sacrifices to the God of the dead; but after death their toil ceaseth. Woe is me, for I was well beloved by the God of the living, and cruel wert thou, O my brother, who didst snatch me away from his power and his dominion." Having uttered these words, he rose suddenly, and fled over the sands: and Cain said in his heart, "The curse of the Lord is on me; but who is the God of the dead?" and he ran after the Shape, and the Shape fled shrieking over the sands, and the sands rose like white mists behind the steps of Cain, but the feet of him that was like Abel disturbed not the sands. He greatly outrun Cain, and turning short, he wheeled round, and came again to the rock where they had been sitting, and where Enos still stood; and the child caught hold of his garment as he passed by, and he fell upon the ground. And Cain stopped, and beholding him not, said, "he has passed into the dark woods," and he walked slowly back to the rocks; and when he reached it the child told him that he had caught hold of his garment as he passed by, and that the man had fallen upon the ground: and Cain once more sate beside him, and said, "Abel, my brother, I would lament for thee, but that the spirit within me is withered, and burnt up with extreme agony. Now, I pray thee, by thy flocks, and by thy pastures, and by the quiet rivers which thou lovedst, that thou tell me all that thou knowest. Who is the God of the dead? where doth he make his dwelling? what sacrifices are acceptable unto him? for I have offered, but have not been received; I have prayed, and have not been heard; and how can I be afflicted more than I already am?" The Shape arose and answered, "O that thou hadst had pity on me as I will have pity on

thee. Follow me, Son of Adam! and bring thy child with thee!"

And they three passed over the white sands between the rocks, silent as the shadows.

SIBYLLINE LEAVES.

I.—POEMS OCCASIONED BY POLITICAL EVENTS OR FEELINGS CONNECTED WITH THEM.

When I have borne in memory what has tamed
Great nations, how ennobling thoughts depart
When men change swords for ledgers, and desert
The student's bower for gold, some fears unnamed
I had, my country! Am I to be blamed?
Now, when I think of thee, and what thou art,
Verily, in the bottom of my heart,
Of those unfilial fears I am ashamed.
For dearly must we prize thee; we who find
In thee a bulwark for the cause of men;
And I by my affection was beguiled.
What wonder if a poet now and then,
Among the many movements of his mind,
Felt for thee as a Lover or a Child!

WORDSWORTH.

ODE TO THE DEPARTING YEAR.*

Ἰοὺ, ἰοὺ, ὦ ὦ κακά.
Ὑπ' αὖ μὲ δεινὸς ὀρθομαντείας πόνος
Στροβεῖ, ταράσσων φροιμίοις ἐφημίοις.
* * * * *
Τὸ μέλλον ἥξει. Καὶ σὺ μ' ἐν τάχει παρὼν
Ἄγαν γ' ἀληθόμαντιν οἰκτείρας ἐρεῖς.

Æschyl. Agam. 1225.

ARGUMENT.

The Ode commences with an address to the Divine Providence, that regulates into one vast harmony all the events of time, however calamitous some of them may appear to mortals. The second Strophe calls on men to suspend their private joys and sorrows, and devote them for a while to the cause of human nature in general. The first Epode speaks of the Empress of Russia, who died of an apoplexy on the 17th of November, 1796; having just concluded a subsidiary treaty with the Kings combined against France. The first and second Antistrophe describe the image of the Departing Year, &c., as in a vision. The second Epode prophecies, in anguish of spirit, the downfall of this country.

I.

Spirit who sweepest the wild harp of Time!
It is most hard, with an untroubled ear
Thy dark inwoven harmonies to hear!
Yet, mine eye fixed on Heaven's unchanging clime,
Long had I listened, free from mortal fear,
With inward stillness, and a bowed mind;
When lo! its folds far waving on the wind,
I saw the train of the departing Year!

* This Ode was composed on the 24th, 25th, and 26th days of December, 1796; and was first published on the last day of that year.

Starting from my silent sadness
Then with no unholy madness
Ere yet the entered cloud foreclosed my sight,
I raised the impetuous song, and solemnised his flight

II.

Hither from the recent tomb,
From the prisoner's direr gloom,
From distemper's midnight anguish;
And thence, where poverty doth waste and languish!
Or where, his two bright torches blending,
Love illumines manhood's maze;
Or where o'er cradled infants bending
Hope has fixed her wishful gaze;
Hither, in perplexed dance,
Ye Woes! ye young-eyed Joys! advance!

By Time's wild harp, and by the hand
Whose indefatigable sweep
Raises its fateful strings from sleep,
I bid you haste, a mixed tumultuous band!
From every private bower,
And each domestic hearth,
Haste for one solemn hour;
And with a loud and yet a louder voice,
O'er Nature struggling in portentous birth,
Weep and rejoice!
Still echoes the dread name that o'er the earth
Let slip the storm, and woke the brood of hell:
And now advance in saintly jubilee
Justice and Truth! They too have heard thy spell!
They too obey thy name, divinest Liberty!

III.

I marked Ambition in his war-array!
I heard the mailed Monarch's troublous cry—
"Ah! wherefore does the Northern Conqueress stay!
Groans not her chariot on its onward way?
Fly, mailed Monarch, fly!
Stunned by Death's twice mortal mace,
No more on murder's lurid face
The insatiate hag shall gloat with drunken eye!
Manes of the unnumbered slain!
Ye that gasped on Warsaw's plain!
Ye that erst at Ismail's tower,
When human ruin choked the streams,
Fell in conquest's glutted hour
'Mid women's shrieks and infants' screams!
Spirits of the uncoffined slain,
Sudden blasts of triumph swelling,
Oft, at night, in misty train,
Rush around her narrow dwelling!
The exterminating fiend is fled—
(Foul her life, and dark her doom)
Mighty armies of the dead
Dance, like death-fires, round her tomb!
Then with prophetic song relate,
Each some tyrant-murderer's fate!

IV.

Departing Year! 'twas on no earthly shore
My soul beheld thy vision! Where alone,
Voiceless and stern, before the cloudy throne,
Aye Memory sits: thy robe inscribed with gore,

With many an unimaginable groan
Thou storied'st thy sad hours! Silence ensued,
Deep silence o'er the ethereal multitude,
Whose locks with wreaths, whose wreaths with glories shone.
Then, his eye wild ardours glancing,
From the choired gods advancing,
The Spirit of the Earth made reverence meet,
And stood up, beautiful, before the cloudy seat.

v.

Throughout the blissful throng,
Hushed were harp and song:
Till wheeling round the throne the Lampads seven,
(The mystic Words of Heaven)
Permissive signal make:
The fervent Spirit bowed, then spread his wings and spake!
"Thou in stormy blackness throning
Love and uncreated Light,
By the Earth's unsolaced groaning,
Seize thy terrors, Arm of might!
By peace with proffered insult scared,
Masked hate and envying scorn!
By years of havoc yet unborn!
And hunger's bosom to the frost-winds bared!
But chief by Afric's wrongs,
Strange, horrible, and foul!
By what deep guilt belongs
To the deaf Synod, 'full of gifts and lies!'
By wealth's insensate laugh! by torture's howl!
Avenger, rise!
For ever shall the thankless Island scowl,

Her quiver full, and with unbroken bow?
Speak! from thy storm-black Heaven O speak aloud!
And on the darkling foe
Open thine eye of fire from some uncertain cloud!
O dart the flash! O rise and deal the blow!
The Past to thee, to thee the Future cries!
Hark! how wide Nature joins her groans below!
Rise, God of Nature! rise."

VI.

The voice had ceased, the vision fled;
Yet still I gasped and reeled with dread.
And ever, when the dream of night
Renews the phantom to my sight,
Cold sweat-drops gather on my limbs;
My ears throb hot; my eye-balls start;
My brain with horrid tumult swims;
Wild is the tempest of my heart;
And my thick and struggling breath
Imitates the toil of death!
No stranger agony confounds
The soldier on the war-field spread,
When all foredone with toil and wounds,
Death-like he dozes among heaps of dead!
(The strife is o'er, the day-light fled,
And the night-wind clamours hoarse!
See! the starting wretch's head
Lies pillowed on a brother's corse!)

VII.

Not yet enslaved, not wholly vile,
O Albion! O my mother Isle!
Thy valleys, fair as Eden's bowers,
Glitter green with sunny showers;

Thy grassy uplands' gentle swells
Echo to the bleat of flocks;
(Those glassy hills, those glittering dells
Proudly ramparted with rocks)
And Ocean mid his uproar wild
Speaks safety to his island-child.
Hence for many a fearless age
Has social Quiet loved thy shore;
Nor ever proud invader's rage
Or sacked thy towers, or stained thy fields with gore.

VIII.

Abandoned of Heaven! mad avarice thy guide,
At cowardly distance, yet kindling with pride—
Mid thy herds and thy corn-fields secure thou hast stood,
And joined the wild yelling of famine and blood!
The nations curse thee! They with eager wondering
Shall hear Destruction, like a vulture, scream!
Strange-eyed Destruction! who with many a dream
Of central fires through nether seas upthundering
Soothes her fierce solitude; yet as she lies
By livid fount, or red volcanic stream,
If ever to her lidless dragon-eyes,
O Albion! thy predestined ruins rise,
The fiend-hag on her perilous couch doth leap,
Muttering distempered triumph in her charmed sleep

IX.

Away, my soul, away!
In vain, in vain the birds of warning sing—
And hark! I hear the famished brood of prey
Flap their lank pennons on the groaning wind!
Away, my soul, away!

I unpartaking of the evil thing,
With daily prayer and daily toil
Soliciting for food my scanty soil,
Have wailed my country with a loud Lament.
No I recentre my immortal mind
In the deep sabbath of meek self-content;
Cleansed from the vaporous passions that bedim
God's Image, sister of the Seraphim.

FRANCE. AN ODE.

I.

Ye Clouds! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
Ye Ocean-Waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!
Ye Woods! that listen to the night-birds singing,
Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches swinging,
Have made a solemn music of the wind!
Where, like a man beloved of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound!
O ye loud Waves! and O ye Forests high!
And O ye clouds that far above me soared!
Thou rising Sun! thou blue rejoicing Sky!

Yea, every thing that is and will be free!
Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
With what deep worship I have still adored
The spirit of divinest Liberty.

II.

When France in wrath her giant-limbs upreared,
And with that oath, which smote air, earth and sea,
Stamped her strong foot and said she would be free,
Bear witness for me, how I hoped and feared!
With what a joy my lofty gratulation
Unawed I sang, amid a slavish band:
And when to whelm the disenchanted nation,
Like fiends embattled by a wizard's wand,
The Monarchs marched in evil day,
And Britain joined the dire array;
Though dear her shores and circling ocean,
Though many friendships, many youthful loves
Had swol'n the patriot emotion
And flung a magic light o'er all her hills and groves;
Yet still my voice, unaltered, sang defeat
To all that braved the tyrant-quelling lance,
And shame too long delayed and vain retreat!
For ne'er, O Liberty! with partial aim
I dimmed thy light or damped thy holy flame;
But blessed the pæans of delivered France,
And hung my head and wept at Britain's name.

III.

"And what," I said, "though Blasphemy's loud scream
With that sweet music of deliverance strove!
Though all the fierce and drunken passions wove
A dance more wild than e'er was maniac's dream!

Ye storms, that round the dawning east assembled,
The Sun was rising, though ye hid his light!"
And when, to soothe my soul, that hoped and trembled,
The dissonance ceased, and all seemed calmed and bright
When France her front deep-scarr'd and gory
Concealed with clustering wreaths of glory;
When, insupportably advancing,
Her arm made mockery of the warrior's tramp;
While timid looks of fury glancing,
Domestic treason, crushed beneath her fatal stamp,
Writhed like a wounded dragon in his gore;
Then I reproached my fears that would not flee;
"And soon," I said, "shall Wisdom teach her lore
In the low huts of them that toil and groan!
And, conquering by her happiness alone,
Shall France compel the nations to be free,
Till Love and Joy look round, and call the Earth their

IV.

Forgive me, Freedom! O forgive those dreams!
I hear thy voice, I hear thy loud lament,
From bleak Helvetia's icy cavern sent—
I hear thy groans upon her blood-stained streams!
Heroes, that for your peaceful country perished,
And ye that, fleeing, spot your mountain-snows
With bleeding wounds; forgive me, that I cherished
One thought that ever blessed your cruel foes!
To scatter rage, and traitorous guilt,
Where Peace her jealous home had built;
A patriot-race to disinherit
Of all that made their stormy wilds so dear;
And with inexpiable spirit
To taint the bloodless freedom of the mountaineer—

O France, that mockest Heaven, adulterous, blind,
And patriot only in pernicious toils,
Are these thy boasts, Champion of human kind?
To mix with Kings in the low lust of sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey;
To insult the shrine of Liberty with spoils
From freemen torn; to tempt and to betray?

V.

The Sensual and the Dark rebel in vain,
Slaves by their own compulsion! In mad game
They burst their manacles and wear the name
Of Freedom, graven on a heavier chain!
O Liberty! with profitless endeavour
Have I pursued thee, many a weary hour;
But thou nor swell'st the victor's strain, nor ever
Didst breathe thy soul in forms of human power.
Alike from all, howe'er they praise thee,
(Nor prayer, nor boastful name delays thee)
Alike from Priestcraft's harpy minions,
And factious Blasphemy's obscener slaves,
Thou speedest on thy subtle pinions,
The guide of homeless winds, and playmate of the waves!
And there I felt thee!—on that sea-cliff's verge,
Whose pines, scarce travelled by the breeze above,
Had made one murmur with the distant surge!
Yes, while I stood and gazed, my temples bare,
And shot my being through earth, sea and air,
Possessing all things with intensest love,
O Liberty! my spirit felt thee there.

February, 1797.

FEARS IN SOLITUDE,

WRITTEN IN APRIL, 1798, DURING THE ALARM OF AN INVASION.

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell! O'er stiller place
No singing sky-lark ever poised himself.
The hills are heathy, save that swelling slope,
Which hath a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely: but the dell,
Bathed by the mist is fresh and delicate
As vernal corn-field, or the unripe flax,
When, through its half-transparent stalks, at eve,
The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
Oh! 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook!
Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly he,
The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
Knew just so much of folly, as had made
His early manhood more securely wise!
Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,
While from the singing-lark (that sings unseen
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best,)
And from the sun, and from the breezy air,
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame;
And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religous meanings in the forms of nature!
And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
And dreaming hears thee still, O singing-lark;
That singest like an angel in the clouds!

My God! it is a melancholy thing
For such a man, who would full fain preserve
His soul in calmness, yet perforce must feel
For all his human brethren—O my God!
It weighs upon the heart, that he must think
What uproar and what strife may now be stirring
This way or that way o'er these silent hills—
Invasion, and the thunder and the shout,
And all the crash of onset; fear and rage,
And undetermined conflict—even now,
Even now, perchance, and in his native isle:
Carnage and groans beneath this blessed sun!
We have offended, Oh! my countrymen!
We have offended very grievously,
And been most tyrannous. From east to west
A groan of accusation pierces Heaven!
The wretched plead against us; multitudes
Countless and vehement, the sons of God,
Our brethren! Like a cloud that travels on,
Steamed up from Cairo's swamps of pestilence,
Even so, my countrymen! have we gone forth
And borne to distant tribes slavery and pangs,
And, deadlier far, our vices, whose deep taint
With slow perdition murders the whole man,
His body and his soul! Meanwhile, at home,
All individual dignity and power
Engulfed in courts, committees, institutions,
Associations and societies,
A vain, speech-mouthing, speech-reporting guild,
One benefit-club for mutual flattery,
We have drunk up, demure as at a grace,
Pollutions from the brimming cup of wealth;
Contemptuous of all honourable rule,

Yet bartering freedom and the poor man's life
For gold, as at a market! The sweet words
Of Christian promise, words that even yet
Might stem destruction, were they wisely preached,
Are muttered o'er by men, whose tones proclaim
How flat and wearisome they feel their trade:
Rank scoffers some, but most too indolent
To deem them falsehoods or to know their truth.
Oh! blasphemous! the book of life is made
A superstitious instrument, on which
We gabble o'er the oaths we mean to break:
For all must swear—all and in every place,
College and wharf, council and justice-court;
All, all must swear, the briber and the bribed,
Merchant and lawyer, senator and priest,
The rich, the poor, the old man and the young;
All, all make up one scheme of perjury,
That faith doth reel; the very name of God
Sounds like a juggler's charm; and, bold with joy,
Forth from his dark and lonely hiding-place,
(Portentous sight!) the owlet Atheism,
Sailing on obscene wings athwart the noon,
Drops his blue-fringed lids, and holds them close,
And hooting at the glorious sun in Heaven,
Cries out, "Where is it?"

Thankless too for peace,
(Peace long preserved by fleets and perilous seas)
Secure from actual warfare, we have loved
To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war!
Alas! for ages ignorant of all
Its ghastlier workings, (famine or blue plague,
Battle, or siege, or flight though wintry snows,)

We, this whole people, have been clamorous
For war and bloodshed; animating sports,
The which we pay for as a thing to talk of,
Spectators and not combatants! No guess
Anticipative of a wrong unfelt,
No speculation or contingency,
However dim and vague, too vague and dim
To yield a justifying cause; and forth,
(Stuffed out with big preamble, holy names,
And adjurations of the God in Heaven,)
We send our mandates for the certain death
Of thousands, and ten thousands! Boys and girls,
And women, that would groan to see a child
Pull off an insect's leg, all read of war,
The best amusement for our morning-meal!
The poor wretch, who has learnt his only prayers
From curses, who knows scarcely words enough
To ask a blessing from his Heavenly Father,
Becomes a fluent phraseman, absolute
And technical in victories and defeats,
And all our dainty terms for fratricide;
Terms which we trundle smoothly o'er our tongues
Like mere abstractions, empty sounds to which
We join no feeling and attach no form!
As if the soldier died without a wound;
As if the fibres of this godlike frame
Were gored without a pang; as if the wretch,
Who fell in battle, doing bloody deeds,
Passed off to Heaven, translated and not killed;
As though he had no wife to pine for him
No God to judge him! Therefore, evil days
Are coming on us, O my countrymen!
And what if all-avenging Providence,

Strong and retributive, should make us know
The meaning of our words, force us to feel
The desolation and the agony
Of our fierce doings!

Spare us yet awhile,
Father and God! O! spare us yet awhile!
Oh! let not English women drag their flight
Fainting beneath the burthen of their babes,
Of the sweet infants, that but yesterday
Laughed at the breast! Sons, brothers, husbands, all
Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
Which grew up with you round the same fire-side,
And all who ever heard the sabbath-bells
Without the infidel's scorn, make yourselves pure!
Stand forth! be men! repel an impious foe,
Impious and false, a light yet cruel race,
Who laugh away all virtue, mingling mirth
With deeds of murder; and still promising
Freedom, themselves too sensual to be free
Poison life's amities, and cheat the heart
Of faith and quiet hope, and all that soothes
And all that lifts the spirit! Stand we forth;
Render them back upon the insulted ocean,
And let them toss as idly on its waves
As the vile sea-weed, which some mountain-blast
Swept from our shores! And oh! may we return
Not with a drunken triumph, but with fear,
Repenting of the wrongs with which we stung
So fierce a foe to frenzy!

I have told,
O Britons! O my brethren! I have told

Most bitter truth, but without bitterness.
Nor deem my zeal or factious or mis-timed;
For never can true courage dwell with them,
Who, playing tricks with conscience, dare not look
At their own vices. We have been too long
Dupes of a deep delusion! Some, belike,
Groaning with restless enmity, expect
All change from change of constituted power;
As if a Government had been a robe,
On which our vice and wretchedness were tagged
Like fancy-points and fringes, with the robe
Pulled off at pleasure. Fondly these attach
A radical causation to a few
Poor drudges of chastising Providence,
Who borrow all their hues and qualities
From our own folly and rank wickedness,
Which gave them birth and nursed them. Others, meanwhile,
Dote with a mad idolatry; and all
Who will not fall before their images,
And yield them worship, they are enemies
Even of their country!

Such have I been deemed—
But, O dear Britain! O my Mother Isle!
Needs must thou prove a name most dear and holy
To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
A husband, and a father! who revere
All bonds of natural love, and find them all
Within the limits of thy rocky shores.
O native Britain! O my Mother Isle!
How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear and holy
To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,

Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in nature,
All lovely and all honourable things,
Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being?
There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
Unborrowed from my country. O divine
And beauteous island! thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me!

May my fears,
My filial fears, be vain! and may the vaunts
And menace of the vengeful enemy
Pass like the gust, that roared and died away
In the distant tree: which heard, and only heard
In this low dell, bowed not the delicate grass.

But now the gentle dew-fall sends abroad
The fruit-like perfume of the golden furze:
The light has left the summit of the hill,
Though still a sunny gleam lies beautiful,
Aslant the ivied beacon. Now farewell,
Farewell, awhile, O soft and silent spot!
On the green sheep-track, up the heathy hill,
Homeward I wind my way; and lo! recalled
From bodings that have well nigh wearied me,
I find myself upon the brow, and pause
Startled! And after lonely sojourning
In such a quiet and surrounded nook,

This burst of prospect, here the shadowy main,
Dim tinted, there the mighty majesty
Of that huge amphitheatre of rich
And elmy fields, seems like society—
Conversing with the mind, and giving it
A livelier impulse and a dance of thought!
And now, beloved Stowey! I behold
Thy church-tower, and, methinks, the four huge elms
Clustering, which mark the mansion of my friend;
And close behind them, hidden from my view,
Is my own lowly cottage, where my babe
And my babe's mother dwell in peace! With light
And quickened footsteps thitherward I tend,
Remembering thee, O green and silent dell!
And grateful, that by nature's quietness
And solitary musings, all my heart
Is softened, and made worthy to indulge
Love, and the thoughts that yearn for human kind.

NETHER STOWEY,
April 28th, 1798.

FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER.

APOLOGETIC PREFACE.

At the house of a gentleman, who, by the principles and corresponding virtues of a sincere Christian, consecrates a cultivated genius and the favourable accidents of birth, opulence, and splendid connexions, it was my good fortune to meet, in a dinner-party, with more men of celebrity in science or polite literature, than are commonly found collected round the same table. In the course of conversation, one of the party reminded an illustrious poet, then present, of some verses which he had recited that morning, and which has appeared in a newspaper under the name of a War-Eclogue, in which Fire, Famine, and Slaughter were introduced as the speakers. The gentleman so addressed replied, that he was rather surprised that none of us should have noticed or heard of the poem, as it had been, at the time, a good deal talked of in Scotland. It may be easily supposed, that my feeling was at this moment not of the most comfortable kind. Of all present, one only knew, or suspected me to be the author; a man who would have established himself in the first rank of England's living poets, if the genius of our country had not decreed that he should rather be the first in the first rank of its philosophers and scientific benefactors. It appeared the general wish to hear the lines. As my friend chose to remain silent, I chose to follow his example, and Mr. * * * * * recited the poem. This he could do with the better grace, being known to have ever been not only a firm and active Anti-Jacobin and Anti-Gallican, but likewise a zealous admirer of Mr. Pitt, both as a good man and a great statesman. As a poet exclusively, he had been amused with the Eclogue; as a poet he recited it; and in a spirit, which made it evident, that he would have read and repeated it with the same pleasure, had his own name been attached to the imaginary object or agent.

After the recitation, our amiable host observed, that in his opinion Mr. * * * * * had over-rated the merits of the poetry; but had they been tenfold greater, they could not have compensated for that malignity of heart, which could alone have prompted

sentiments so atrocious. I perceived that my illustrious friend became greatly distressed on my account; but fortunately I was able to preserve fortitude and presence of mind enough to take up the subject without exciting even a suspicion how nearly and painfully it interested me.

What follows, is the substance of what I then replied, but dilated and in language less colloquial. It was not my intention, I said, to justify the publication, whatever its author's feelings might have been at the time of composing it. That they are calculated to call forth so severe a reprobation from a good man, is not the worst feature of such poems. Their moral deformity is aggravated in proportion to the pleasure which they are capable of affording to vindictive, turbulent, and unprincipled readers. Could it be supposed, though for a moment, that the author seriously wished what he had thus wildly imagined, even the attempt to palliate an inhumanity so monstrous would be an insult to the hearers. But it seemed to me worthy of consideration, whether the mood of mind, and the general state of sensations, in which a poet produces such vivid and fantastic images, is likely to co-exist, or is even compatible with, that gloomy and deliberate ferocity which a serious wish to realise them would pre-suppose. It had been often observed, and all my experience tended to confirm the observation, that prospects of pain and evil to others, and in general, all deep feelings of revenge, are commonly expressed in a few words, ironically tame, and mild. The mind under so direful and fiend-like an influence seems to take a morbid pleasure in contrasting the intensity of its wishes and feelings, with the slightness or levity of the expressions by which they are hinted; and indeed feelings so intense and solitary, if they were not precluded (as in almost all cases they would be) by a constitutional activity of fancy and association, and by the specific joyousness combined with it, would assuredly themselves preclude such activity. Passion, in its own quality, is the antagonist of action; though in an ordinary and natural degree the former alternates with the latter, and thereby revives and strengthens it. But the more intense and insane the passion is, the fewer and the more fixed are the correspondent forms and notions. A rooted hatred, an inveterate thirst of revenge, is a sort of madness, and still eddies round its

favourite object, and exercises as it were a perpetual tautology of mind in thoughts and words, which admit of no adequate substitutes. Like a fish in a globe of glass, it moves restlessly round and round the scanty circumference, which it cannot leave without losing its vital element.

There is a second character of such imaginary representations as spring from a real and earnest desire of evil to another, which we often see in real life, and might even anticipate from the nature of the mind. The images, I mean, that a vindictive man places before his imagination, will most often be taken from the realities of life: they will be images of pain and suffering which he has himself seen inflicted on other men, and which he can fancy himself as inflicting on the object of his hatred. I will suppose that we had heard at different times two common sailors, each speaking of some one who had wronged or offended him: that the first with apparent violence had devoted every part of his adversary's body and soul to all the horrid phantoms and fantastic places that ever Quevedo dreamt of, and this in a rapid flow of those outrageous and wildly combined execrations, which too often with our lower classes serve for escape-valves to carry off the excess of their passions, as so much superfluous steam that would endanger the vessel if it were retained. The other, on the contrary, with that sort of calmness of tone which is to the ear what the paleness of anger is to the eye, shall simply say, "If I chance to be made boatswain, as I hope I soon shall, and can but once get that fellow under my hand (and I shall be upon the watch for him), I'll tickle his pretty skin! I wont hurt him! oh no! I'll only cut the —— to the liver!" I dare appeal to all present, which of the two they would regard as the least deceptive symptom of deliberate malignity? nay, whether it would surprise them to see the first fellow, an hour or two afterwards, cordially shaking hands with the very man, the fractional parts of whose body and soul he had been so charitably disposing of; or even perhaps risking his life for him. What language Shakespeare considered characteristic of malignant disposition, we see in the speech of the good-natured Gratiano, who spoke "an infinite deal of nothing more than any man in all Venice;"

——"Too wild, too rude and bold of voice!"

the skipping spirit, whose thoughts and words reciprocally ran away with each other;

> —— "O be thou damn'd, inexorable dog!
> And for thy life let justice be accused!"

and the wild fancies that follow, contrasted with Shylock's tranquil "I stand here for Law."

Or, to take a case more analogous to the present subject, should we hold it either fair or charitable to believe it to have been Dante's serious wish, that all the persons mentioned by him (many recently departed, and some even alive at the time), should actually suffer the fantastic and horrible punishments, to which he has sentenced them in his Hell and Purgatory? Or what shall we say of the passages in which Bishop Jeremy Taylor anticipates the state of those who, vicious themselves, have been the cause of vice and misery to their fellow-creatures. Could we endure for a moment to think that a spirit like Bishop Taylor's, burning with Christian love; that a man constitutionally overflowing with pleasurable kindliness; who scarcely even in a casual illustration introduces the image of woman, child, or bird, but he embalms the thought with so rich a tenderness, as makes the very words seem beauties and fragments of poetry from Euripides or Simonides;—can we endure to think, that a man so natured and so disciplined, did at the time of composing this horrible picture, attach a sober feeling of reality to the phrases? or that he would have described in the same tone of justification, in the same luxuriant flow of phrases, the tortures about to be inflicted on a living individual by a verdict of the Star-Chamber? or the still more atrocious sentences executed on the Scotch anti-prelatists and schismatics, at the command, and in some instances under the very eye of the Duke of Lauderdale, and of that wretched bigot who afterwards dishonoured and forfeited the throne of Great Britain? Or do we not rather feel and understand, that these violent words were mere bubbles, flashes and electrical apparitions, from the magic cauldron of a fervid and ebullient fancy, constantly fuelled by an unexampled opulence of language.

Were I now to have read by myself for the first time the poem in question, my conclusion, I fully believe, would be, that the

writer must have been some man of warm feelings and active fancy; that he had painted to himself the circumstances that accompany war in so many vivid and yet fantastic forms, as proved that neither the images nor the feelings were the result of observation, or in any way derived from realities. I should judge, that they were the product of his own seething imagination, and therefore impregnated with that pleasurable exultation which is experienced in all energetic exertion of intellectual power; that in the same mood he had generalised the causes of the war, and then personified the abstract and christened it by the name which he had been accustomed to hear most often associated with its management and measures. I should guess that the minister was in the author's mind at the moment of composition, as completely ἀπαδὴς, ἀναιμόσαρκος, as Anacreon's grasshopper, and that he had as little notion of a real person of flesh and blood,

"Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,"

as Milton had in the grim and terrible phantoms (half person, half allegory) which he has placed at the gates of Hell. I concluded by observing, that the poem was not calculated to excite passion in any mind, or to make any impression except on poetic readers; and that from the culpable levity, betrayed at the close of the eclogue by the grotesque union of epigrammatic wit with allegoric personification, in the allusion to the most fearful of thoughts, I should conjecture that the "rantin' Bardie," instead of really believing, much less wishing, the fate spoken of in the last line, in application to any human individual, would shrink from passing the verdict even on the Devil himself, and exclaim with poor Burns,

But fare ye weel, auld Nickie-ben!
Oh! wad ye tak a thought an' men!
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake—
I'm wae to think upon you den,
Ev'n for your sake.

I need not say that these thoughts, which are here dilated, were in such a company only rapidly suggested. Our kind host smiled, and with a courteous compliment observed, that the

defence was too good for the cause. My voice faltered a little, for I was somewhat agitated; though not so much on my own account as for the uneasiness that so kind and friendly a man would feel from the thought that he had been the occasion of distressing me. At length I brought out these words: "I must now confess, Sir! that I am the author of that poem. It was written some years ago. I do not attempt to justify my past self, young as I then was; but as little as I would now write a similar poem, so far was I even then from imagining, that the lines would be taken as more or less than a sport of fancy. At all events, if I know my own heart, there was never a moment in my existence in which I should have been more ready, had Mr. Pitt's person been in hazard, to interpose my own body, and defend his life at the risk of my own."

I have prefaced the poem with this anecdote, because to have printed it without any remark might well have been understood as implying an unconditional approbation on my part, and this after many years' consideration. But if it be asked why I re-published it at all, I answer that the poem had been attributed at different times to different other persons; and what I had dared beget, I thought it neither manly nor honourable not to dare father. From the same motives I should have published perfect copies of two poems, the one entitled The Devil's Thoughts, and the other, The Two round Spaces on Tomb-Stone,* but that the first three stanzas of the former, which were worth all the rest of the poem, and the best stanza of the remainder, were written by a friend of deserved celebrity, and because there are passages in both, which might have given offence to the religious feelings of certain readers. I myself

* Both these poems were subsequently admitted by the author into the general collection of his poetical works; "The Devil's Thoughts," in 1828, with the omission of several stanzas, afterwards restored; "The Two Round Spaces on a Tomb-Stone," in 1834, with a statement prefixed, in which he expressed a regret that the sportive production of his youth, then for the first time published by himself, had not been allowed to perish. In the present edition the former piece is retained, the latter omitted, as the course which appears to the Editors most agreeable to the implied wish and judgment of the author. "The Devil's Thoughts," under the name of "The Devil's Walk," has also been published with large additions by Mr. Southey, *Poetical Works*, vol. iii., p. 83.—Edd.

indeed see no reason why vulgar superstitions, and absurd conceptions that deform the pure faith of a Christian, should possess a greater immunity from ridicule than stories of witches, or the fables of Greece and Rome. But there are those who deem it profaneness and irreverence to call an ape an ape, if it but wear a monk's cowl on its head; and I would rather reason with this weakness than offend it.

The passage from Jeremy Taylor to which I referred, is found in his second Sermon on Christ's Advent to Judgment; which is likewise the second in his year's course of sermons. Among many remarkable passages of the same character in those discourses, I have selected this as the most so. "But when this Lion of the tribe of Judah shall appear, then Justice shall strike and Mercy shall not hold her hands; she shall strike sore strokes, and Pity shall not break the blow. As there are treasures of good things, so hath God a treasure of wrath and fury, and scourges and scorpions; and then shall be produced the shame of lust and the malice of envy, and the groans of the oppressed and the persecutions of the saints, and the cares of covetousness and the troubles of ambition, and the indolence of traitors and the violences of rebels, and the rage of anger and the uneasiness of impatience, and the restlessness of unlawful desires; and by this time the monsters and diseases will be numerous and intolerable, when God's heavy hand shall press the sanies and the intolerableness, the obliquity and the unreasonableness, the amazement and the disorder, the smart and the sorrow, the guilt and the punishment, out from all our sins, and pour them into one chalice, and mingle them with an infinite wrath, and make the wicked drink off all the vengeance, and force it down their unwilling throats with the violence of devils and accursed spirits."

That this Tartarean drench displays the imagination rather than the discretion of the compounder; that, in short, this passage and others of the same kind are in a bad taste, few will deny at the present day. It would, doubtless, have more behoved the good bishop not to be wise beyond what is written on a subject in which Eternity is opposed to Time, and a death threatened, not the negative, but the positive Opposite of Life; a subject, therefore, which must of necessity be indescribable to the

human understanding in our present state. But I can neither find nor believe, that it ever occurred to any reader to ground on such passages a charge against Bishop Taylor's humanity, or goodness of heart. I was not a little surprised therefore to find, in the Pursuits of Literature and other works, so horrible a sentence passed on Milton's moral character, for a passage in his prose writings, as nearly parallel to this of Taylor's as two passages can well be conceived to be. All his merits, as a poet, forsooth—all the glory of having written the Paradise Lost, are light in the scale, nay, kick the beam, compared with the atrocious malignity of heart, expressed in the offensive paragraph. I remembered, in general, that Milton had concluded one of his works on Reformation, written in the fervour of his youthful imagination, in a high poetic strain, that wanted metre only to become a lyrical poem. I remembered that in the former part he had formed to himself a perfect ideal of human virtue, a character of heroic, disinterested zeal and devotion for Truth, Religion, and public Liberty, in act and in suffering, in the day of triumph and in the hour of martyrdom. Such spirits, as more excellent than others, he describes as having a more excellent reward, and as distinguished by a transcendant glory: and this reward and this glory he displays and particularises with an energy and brilliance that announced the Paradise Lost as plainly, as ever the bright purple clouds in the east announced the coming of the Sun. Milton then passes to the gloomy contrast, to such men as from motives of selfish ambition and the lust of personal aggrandisement should, against their own light, persecute truth and the true religion, and wilfully abuse the powers and gifts entrusted to them, to bring vice, blindness, misery and slavery, on their native country, on the very country that had trusted, enriched and honoured them. Such beings, after that speedy and appropriate removal from their sphere of mischief which all good and humane men must of course desire, will, he takes for granted by parity of reason, meet with a punishment, an ignominy, and a retaliation, as much severer than other wicked men, as their guilt and its consequences were more enormous. His description of this imaginary punishment presents more distinct pictures to the fancy than the extract from Jeremy Taylor; but the thoughts in the latter are incomparably more exaggerated and horrific. All this I knew; but I neither

remembered, nor by reference and careful re-perusal could discover, any other meaning, either in Milton or Taylor, but that good men will be rewarded, and the impenitent wicked punished, in proportion to their dispositions and intentional acts in this life; and that if the punishment of the least wicked be fearful beyond conception, all words and descriptions must be so far true, that they must fall short of the punishment that awaits the transcendantly wicked. Had Milton stated either his ideal of virtue, or of depravity, as an individual or individuals actually existing? Certainly not. Is this representation worded historically, or only hypothetically? Assuredly the latter. Does he express it as his own wish, that after death they should suffer these tortures? or as a general consequence, deduced from reason and revelation, that such will be their fate? Again, the latter only. His wish is expressly confined to a speedy stop being put by Providence to their power of inflicting misery on others. But did he name or refer to any persons living or dead? No. But the calumniators of Milton dare say (for what will calumny not dare say?) that he had Laud and Strafford in his mind, while writing of remorseless persecution, and the enslavement of a free country, from motives of selfish ambition. Now, what if a stern anti-prelatist should dare say, that in speaking of the insolencies of traitors and the violences of rebels, Bishop Taylor must have individualised in his mind, Hampden, Hollis, Pym, Fairfax, Ireton, and Milton? And what if he should take the liberty of concluding, that, in the after description, the Bishop was feeding and feasting his party-hatred, and with those individuals before the eyes of his imagination enjoying, trait by trait, horror after horror, the picture of their intolerable agonies? Yet this bigot would have an equal right thus to criminate the one good and great man, as these men have to criminate the other. Milton has said, and I doubt not but that Taylor with equal truth could have said it, "that in his whole life he never spake against a man even that his skin should be grazed." He asserted this when one of his opponents (either Bishop Hall or his nephew) had called upon the women and children in the streets to take up stones and stone him (Milton). It is known that Milton repeatedly used his interest to protect the royalists; but even at a time when all lies would have been meritorious against him, no charge was made, no story pretended, that he had ever

directly or indirectly engaged or assisted in their persecution. Oh! methinks there are other and far better feelings, which should be acquired by the perusal of our great elder writers. When I have before me on the same table, the works of Hammond and Baxter: when I reflect with what joy and dearness their blessed spirits are now loving each other: it seems a mournful thing that their names should be perverted to an occasion of bitterness among us, who are enjoying that happy mean which the human too-much on both sides was perhaps necessary to produce. "The tangle of delusions which stifled and distorted the growing tree of our well-being has been torn away; the parasite-weeds that fed on its very roots have been plucked up with a salutary violence. To us there remain only quiet duties, the constant care, the gradual improvement, the cautious unhazardous labours of the industrious though contented gardener —to prune, to strengthen, to engraft, and one by one to remove from its leaves and fresh shoots the slug and the caterpillar. But far be it from us to undervalue with light and senseless detraction the conscientious hardihood of our predecessors, or even to condemn in them that vehemence, to which the blessings it won for us leave us now neither temptation nor pretext. We ante-date the feelings, in order to criminate the authors, of our present liberty, light and toleration."*

If ever two great men might seem, during their whole lives, to have moved in direct opposition, though neither of them has at any time introduced the name of the other, Milton and Jeremy Taylor were they. The former commenced his career by attacking the Church-Liturgy and all set forms of prayer. The latter, but far more successfully, by defending both. Milton's next work was then against the Prelacy and the then existing Church-Government — Taylor's in vindication and support of them. Milton became more and more a stern republican, or rather an advocate for that religious and moral aristocracy which, in his day, was called republicanism, and which, even more than royalism itself, is the direct antipode of modern jacobinism. Taylor, as more and more sceptical concerning the fitness of men in general for power, became more and more attached to the prerogatives of monarchy. From Calvinism with a still decreasing respect for Fathers, Councils, and for Church antiquity in general,

* The Friend, vol. 1, p. 81.

Milton seems to have ended in an indifference, if not a dislike, to all forms of ecclesiastic government, and to have retreated wholly into the inward and spiritual church-communion of his own spirit with the Light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Taylor, with a growing reverence for authority, an increasing sense of the insufficiency of the Scriptures without the aids of tradition and the consent of authorised interpreters, advanced as far in his approaches (not indeed to Popery, but) to Roman-Catholicism, as a conscientious minister of the English Church could well venture. Milton would be, and would utter the same, to all, on all occasions: he would tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Taylor would become all things to all men, if by any means he might benefit any; hence he availed himself, in his popular writings, of opinions and representations which stand often in striking contrast with the doubts and convictions expressed in his more philosophical works. He appears, indeed, not too severely to have blamed that management of truth (istam falsitatem dispensativam) authorised and exemplified by almost all the fathers: Integrum omnino doctoribus et cœtus Christiani antistitibus esse, ut dolos versent, falsa veris intermisceant et imprimis religionis hostes fallant, dummodo veritatis commodis et utilitati inserviant.*

The same antithesis might be carried on with the elements of their several intellectual powers. Milton, austere, condensed, imaginative, supporting his truth by direct enunciation of lofty moral sentiment and by distinct visual representations, and in the same spirit overwhelming what he deemed falsehood by moral denunciation and a succession of pictures appalling or repulsive. In his prose, so many metaphors, so many allegorical miniatures. Taylor, eminently discursive, accumulative, and (to use one of his own words) agglomerative; still more rich in images than Milton himself, but images of fancy, and presented to the common and passive eye, rather than to the eye of the imagination. Whether supporting or assailing, he makes his way either by argument or by appeals to the affections, unsurpassed even by the schoolmen in subtlety, agility, and logic wit, and unrivalled by the most rhetorical of the fathers in the copiousness and vividness of his expressions and illustrations.

* Such is the unwilling confession of Ribof (*Program. di Œconomiâ Patrum*) quoted in the Friend, vol. i., p. 41.

Here words that convey feelings, and words that flash images, and words of abstract notion, flow together, and whirl and rush onward like a stream, at once rapid and full of eddies; and yet still interfused here and there, we see a tongue or islet of smooth water, with some picture in it of earth or sky, landscape or living group of quiet beauty.

Differing, then, so widely, and almost contrariantly, wherein did these great men agree? wherein did they resemble each other? In genius, in learning, in unfeigned piety, in blameless purity of life, and in benevolent aspirations and purposes for the moral and temporal improvement of their fellow-creatures! Both of them wrote a Latin Accidence, to render education less painful to children; both of them composed hymns and psalms proportioned to the capacity of common congregations; both, nearly at the same time, set the glorious example of publicly recommending and supporting general toleration, and the liberty both of the pulpit and the press! In the writings of neither shall we find a single sentence, like those meek deliverances to God's mercy, with which Laud accompanied his votes for the mutilations and loathsome dungeoning of Leighton and others! —nowhere such a pious prayer as we find in Bishop Hall's memoranda of his own life, concerning the subtle and witty atheist that so grievously perplexed and gravelled him at Sir Robert Drury's till he prayed to the Lord to remove him, and behold! his prayers were heard: for shortly afterwards this Philistine combatant went to London, and there perished of the plague in great misery! In short, nowhere shall we find the least approach, in the lives and writings of John Milton or Jeremy Taylor, to that guarded gentleness, to that sighing reluctance, with which the holy brethren of the Inquisition deliver over a condemned heretic to the civil magistrate, recommending him to mercy, and hoping that the magistrate will treat the erring brother with all possible mildness!—the magistrate, who too well knows what would be his own fate, if he dared offend them by acting on their recommendation.

The opportunity of diverting the reader from himself to characters more worthy of his attention, has led me far beyond my first intention; but it is not unimportant to expose the false zeal which has occasioned these attacks on our elder patriots. It has been too much the fashion, first to personify the Church

of England, and then to speak of different individuals, who in different ages have been rulers in that Church, as if in some strange way they constituted its personal identity. Why should a clergyman of the present day feel interested in the defence of Laud or Sheldon? Surely it is sufficient for the warmest partisan of our establishment, that he can assert with truth,—when our Church persecuted, it was on mistaken principles held in common by all Christendom; and at all events, far less culpable was this intolerance in the Bishops, who were maintaining the existing laws, than the persecuting spirit afterwards shown by their successful opponents, who had no such excuse, and who should have been taught mercy by their own sufferings, and wisdom by the utter failure of the experiment in our own case. We can say, that our Church, apostolical in its faith, primitive in its ceremonies, unequalled in its liturgical forms; that our Church, which has kindled and displayed more bright and burning lights of genius and learning, than all other protestant churches since the reformation, was (with the single exception of the times of Laud and Sheldon) least intolerant, when all Christians unhappily deemed a species of intolerance their religious duty; that Bishops of our Church were among the first that contended against this error; and finally, that since the Reformation, when tolerance became a fashion, the Church of England in a tolerating age, has shown herself eminently tolerant, and far more so, both in spirit and in fact, than many of her most bitter opponents, who profess to deem toleration itself an insult on the rights of mankind! As to myself, who not only know the Church-Establishment to be tolerant, but who see in it the greatest, if not the sole safe bulwark of toleration, I feel no necessity of defending or palliating oppressions under the two Charleses, in order to exclaim with a full and fervent heart, Esto perpetua!

FIRE, FAMINE, AND SLAUGHTER.

A WAR ECLOGUE.

The Scene a desolate Tract in La Vendée. FAMINE *is discovered lying on the ground; to her enter* FIRE *and* SLAUGHTER.

FAMINE.

Sisters! sisters! who sent you here?

SLAUGHTER. [*to* FIRE.]

I will whisper it in her ear.

FIRE.

No! no! no!
Spirits hear what spirits tell:
'Twill make a holiday in Hell.
No! no! no!
Myself, I named him once below,
And all the souls, that ~~damned~~ be,
Leaped up at once in anarchy,
Clapped their hands and danced for glee.
They no longer heeded me;
But laughed to hear Hell's burning rafters
Unwillingly re-echo laughters!
No! no! no!
Spirits hear what spirits tell:
'Twill make a holiday in Hell!

FAMINE.

Whisper it, sister! so and so!
In a dark hint, soft and slow.

SLAUGHTER.

Letters four do form his name—
And who sent you!

BOTH.

The same! the same!

SLAUGHTER.

He came by stealth, and unlocked my den,
And I have drunk the blood since then
Of thrice three hundred thousand men.

BOTH

Who bade you do it?

SLAUGHTER.

The same! the same!
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried Halloo!
To him alone the praise is due.

FAMINE.

Thanks, sister, thanks! the men have bled,
Their wives and their children faint for bread.
I stood in a swampy field of battle;
With bones and skulls I made a rattle,
To frighten the wolf and carrion-crow
And the homeless dog—but they would not go.
So off I flew: for how could I bear
To see them gorge their dainty fare?
I heard a groan and a peevish squall,
And through the chink of a cottage-wall—
Can you guess what I saw there?

BOTH.

Whisper it, sister! in our ear.

FAMINE.

A baby beat its dying mother:
I had starved the one and was starving the other!

BOTH.

Who bade you do't?

FAMINE.

The same! the same!
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose, and cried, Halloo!
To him alone the praise is due.

FIRE.

Sisters! I from Ireland came!
Hedge and corn-fields all on flame,
I triumphed o'er the setting sun!
And all the while the work was done,
On as I strode with my huge strides,
I flung back my head and I held my sides,
It was so rare a piece of fun
To see the sweltered cattle run
With uncouth gallop through the night,
Scared by the red and noisy light!
By the light of his own blazing cot
Was many a naked rebel shot:
The house-stream met the flame and hissed,
While crash! fell in the roof, I wist,
On some of those old bed-rid nurses,
That deal in discontent and curses.

BOTH.

Who bade you do't?

FIRE.

The same! the same!
Letters four do form his name.
He let me loose and cried Halloo!
To him alone the praise is due.

ALL.

He let us loose, and cried Halloo!
How shall we yield him honour due?

FAMINE.

Wisdom comes with lack of food.
I'll gnaw, I'll gnaw the multitude,
Till the cup of rage o'erbrim:
They shall seize him and his brood—

SLAUGHTER.

They shall tear him limb from limb!

FIRE.

O thankless beldames and untrue!
And is this all that you can do
For him, who did so much for you?
Ninety months he, by my troth!
Hath richly catered for you both;
And in an hour would you repay
An eight years' work?—Away! away!
I alone am faithful! I
Cling to him everlastingly.

1796.

THE DEVIL'S THOUGHTS.

I.

From his brimstone bed at break of day
A walking the Devil is gone,
To visit his snug little farm the earth,
And see how his stock goes on.

II.

Over the hill and over the dale,
And he went over the plain,
And backward and forward he switched his long tail
As a gentleman switches his cane.

III.

And how then was the Devil drest?
Oh! he was in his Sunday's best:
His jacket was red and his breeches were blue,
And there was a hole where the tail came through.

IV.

He saw a Lawyer killing a viper
On a dunghill hard by his own stable;
And the Devil smiled, for it put him in mind
Of Cain and his brother Abel.

V.

He saw an Apothecary on a white horse
Ride by on his vocations;
And the Devil thought of his old friend
Death in the Revelations.

VI.

He saw a cottage with a double coach-house,
A cottage of gentility;
And the Devil did grin, for his darling sin
Is pride that apes humility.

VII.

He peeped into a rich bookseller's shop,
Quoth he, "We are both of one college!
For I sate myself, like a cormorant, once
Hard by the tree of knowledge." *

* And all amid them stood the tree of life
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold (query paper money:) and next to Life
Our Death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by.—
* * * * *
So clomb this first grand thief——
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life
Sat like a cormorant. *Par. Lost*, iv.

The allegory here is so apt, that in a catalogue of various readings obtained from collating the MSS, one might expect to find it noted, that for "life" Cod.

VIII.

Down the river did glide, with wind and with tide,
A pig with vast celerity;
And the Devil look'd wise as he saw how the while,
It cut its own throat. "There!" quoth he with a smile,
"Goes England's commercial prosperity."

IX.

As he went through Cold-Bath Fields he saw
A solitary cell;
And the Devil was pleased, for it gave him a hint
For improving his prisons in Hell.

X.

He saw a Turnkey in a trice
Fetter a troublesome blade;
"Nimbly," quoth he, "do the fingers move
If a man be but used to his trade."

XI.

He saw the same Turnkey unfetter a man
With but little expedition,
Which put him in mind of the long debate
On the Slave-trade abolition.

quid. habent, "trade." Though indeed the trade, i. e. the bibliopolic, so called κατ' ἐξόχην, may be regarded as Life sensu eminentiori; a suggestion, which I owe to a young retailer in the hosiery line, who on hearing a description of the net profits, dinner parties, country houses, &c., of the trade, exclaimed, "Ay! that's what I call Life now!"—This "Life, our Death," is thus happily contrasted with the fruits of authorship—Sic nos non nobis mellificamus apes.

Of this poem, which with the Fire, Famine, and Slaughter, first appeared in the Morning Post, the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 9th, and 16th stanzas were dictated by Mr. Southey. See Apologetic Preface.

If any one should ask who General —— meant, the Author begs leave to inform him, that he did once see a red-faced person in a dream whom by the dress he took for a General; but he might have been mistaken, and most certainly he did not hear any names mentioned. In simple verity, the author never meant any one, or indeed any thing but to put a concluding stanza to his doggerel.

XII.

He saw an old acquaintance
As he passed by a Methodist meeting;—
She holds a consecrated key,
And the Devil nods her a greeting.

XIII.

She turned up her nose, and said,
"Avaunt! my name's Religion,"
And she looked to Mr. ——
And leered like a love-sick pigeon.

XIV.

He saw a certain minister
(A minister to his mind)
Go up into a certain House,
With a majority behind.

XV.

The Devil quoted Genesis,
Like a very learned clerk,
How "Noah and his creeping things
Went up into the Ark."

XVI.

He took from the poor,
And he gave to the rich,
And he shook hands with a Scotchman,
For he was not afraid of the ——
* * * *

XVII.

General ———— burning face
He saw with consternation,
And back to hell his way did take,
For the Devil thought by a slight mistake
It was general conflagration.

Sep. 6, 1799.

II.—LOVE POEMS.

Quas humilis tenero stylus olim effudit in ævo,
Perlegis hic lacrymas, et quod pharetratus acuta
Ille puer puero fecit mihi cuspide vulnus.
Omnia paulatim consumit longior ætas,
Vivendoque simul morimur, rapimurque manendo.
Ipse mihi collatus enim non ille videbor:
Frons alia est, moresque alii, nova mentis imago,
Voxque aliud sonat—
Pectore nunc gelido calidos miseremur amantes,
Janque arsisse pudet. Veteres tranquilla tumultus
Mens horret, relegensque alium putat ista locutum.

PETRARCH.

LEWTI,

OR THE CIRCASSIAN LOVE-CHAUNT.

At midnight by the stream I roved,
To forget the form I loved.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

The Moon was high, the moonlight gleam
And the shadow of a star
Heaved upon Tamaha's stream;
But the rock shone brighter far,
The rock half sheltered from my view
By pendent boughs of tressy yew—
So shines my Lewti's forehead fair,
Gleaming through her sable hair.
Image of Lewti! from my mind
Depart; for Lewti is not kind.

I saw a cloud of palest hue,
Onward to the moon it passed;
Still brighter and more bright it grew,
With floating colours not a few,
Till it reached the moon at last:
Then the cloud was wholly bright,
With a rich and amber light!
And so with many a hope I seek,
And with such joy I find my Lewti;
And even so my pale wan cheek
Drinks in as deep a flush of beauty!
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind,
If Lewti never will be kind.

The little cloud—it floats away,
Away it goes; away so soon?
Alas! it has no power to stay:
Its hues are dim, its hues are grey—
Away it passes from the moon!
How mournfully it seems to fly,
Ever fading more and more,
To joyless regions of the sky—
And now 'tis whiter than before!
As white as my poor cheek will be,
When, Lewti! on my couch I lie,
A dying man for love of thee.
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
And yet, thou didst not look unkind.

I saw a vapour in the sky,
Thin, and white, and very high;
I ne'er beheld so thin a cloud:
Perhaps the breezes that can fly

Now below and now above,
Have snatched aloft the lawny shroud
Of Lady fair—that died for love.
For maids, as well as youths, have perished
From fruitless love too fondly cherished.
Nay, treacherous image! leave my mind—
For Lewti never will be kind.

Hush! my heedless feet from under
Slip the crumbling banks for ever:
Like echoes to a distant thunder,
They plunge into the gentle river.
The river-swans have heard my tread,
And startle from their reedy bed.
O beauteous birds! methinks ye measure
Your movements to some heavenly tune!
O beauteous birds! 'tis such a pleasure
To see you move beneath the moon,
I would it were your true delight
To sleep by day and wake all night.

I know the place where Lewti lies,
When silent night has closed her eyes:
It is a breezy jasmine-bower,
The nightingale sings o'er her head:
Voice of the night! had I the power
That leafy labyrinth to thread,
And creep, like thee, with soundless tread,
I then might view her bosom white
Heaving lovely to my sight,
As these two swans together heave
On the gently swelling wave.

Oh! that she saw me in a dream,
And dreamt that I had died for care;
All pale and wasted I would seem,
Yet fair withal, as spirits are!
I'd die indeed, if I might see
Her bosom heave, and heave for me!
Soothe, gentle image! soothe my mind!
To-morrow Lewti may be kind.

1795.

LOVE.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She lean'd against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own.
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing—
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined: and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
And she forgave me, that I gazed
Too fondly on her face!

But when I told the cruel scorn
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,
And that he crossed the mountain-woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
And sometimes from the darksome shade,
And sometimes starting up at once
In green and sunny glade,—

There came and looked him in the face
An angel beautiful and bright;
And that he knew it was a Fiend,
This miserable Knight!

And that unknowing what he did,
He leaped amid a murderous band,
And saved from outrage worse than death
The Lady of the Land;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees;
And how she tended him in vain—
And ever strove to expiate
The scorn that crazed his brain;—

And that she nursed him in a cave;
And how his madness went away,
When on the yellow forest-leaves
A dying man he lay;—

His dying words—but when I reached
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
My faltering voice and pausing harp
Disturbed her soul with pity!

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream,
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

LINES SUGGESTED AT —— THEATRE.

Maiden, that with sullen brow
Sitt'st behind those virgins gay,
Like a scorched and mildewed bough,
Leafless 'mid the blooms of May!

Him who lured thee and forsook,
Oft I watched with angry gaze,
Fearful saw his pleading look,
Anxious heard his fervid phrase.

Soft the glances of the youth,
Soft his speech, and soft his sigh;
But no sound like simple truth,
But no true love in his eye.

Loathing thy polluted lot,
Hie thee, Maiden, hie thee hence!
Seek thy weeping Mother's cot,
With a wiser innocence.

Thou hast known deceit and folly,
Thou hast felt that vice is woe:
With a musing melancholy
Inly armed, go, Maiden! go.

Mother sage of self-dominion,
Firm thy steps, O Melancholy!
The strongest plume in wisdom's pinion
Is the memory of past folly.

Mute the sky-lark and forlorn,
While she moults the firstling plumes,
That had skimmed the tender corn,
Or the bean-field's odorous blooms.

Soon with renovated wing
Shall she dare a loftier flight,
Upward to the day-star spring,
And embathe in heavenly light.

TO —

Myrtle-leaf that, ill besped,
Pinest in the gladsome ray,
Soiled beneath the common tread,
Far from thy protecting spray!

When the partridge o'er the sheaf
Whirred along the yellow vale,
Sad I saw thee, heedless leaf!
Love the dalliance of the gale.

Lightly didst thou, foolish thing!
Heave and flutter to his sighs,
While the flatterer, on his wing,
Wooed and whispered thee to rise.

Gaily from thy mother-stalk
Wert thou danced and wafted high—
Soon on this unsheltered walk
Flung to fade, to rot and die.

THE PICTURE,

OR THE LOVER'S RESOLUTION.

Through weeds and thorns and matted underwood
I force my way; now climb, and now descend
O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
Crushing the purple whorts; while oft unseen,
Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves,
The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil
I know not, ask not whither! A new joy,
Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
Beckons me on, or follows from behind,
Playmate, or guide! The master passion quelled,
I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,
Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
Soar up and form a melancholy vault
High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

Here Wisdom might resort, and here Remorse;
Here too the love-lorn man, who, sick in soul,
And of this busy human heart aweary,
Worships the spirit of unconscious life
In tree or wild-flower.—Gentle lunatic!
If so he might not wholly cease to be,
He would far rather not be that, he is;
But would be something, that he knows not of,
In winds or waters, or among the rocks!

But hence, fond wretch! breathe not contagion here!

No myrtle-walks are these: these are no groves
Where Love dare loiter! If in sullen mood
He should stray hither, the low stumps shall gore
His dainty feet, the brier and the thorn
Make his plumes haggard. Like a wounded bird
Easily caught, ensnare him, O ye Nymphs,
Ye Oreads chaste, ye dusky Dryades!
And you, ye Earth-winds! you that make at morn
The dew-drops quiver on the spiders' webs!
You, O ye wingless Airs! that creep between
The rigid stems of heath and bitten furze,
Within whose scanty shade, at summer-noon,
The mother-sheep hath worn a hollow bed—
Ye, that now cool her fleece with dropless damp,
Now pant and murmur with her feeding lamb.
Chase, chase him, all ye Fays, and elfin Gnomes!
With prickles sharper than his darts bemock
His little Godship, making him perforce
Creep through a thorn-bush on yon hedgehog's back.

This is my hour of triumph! I can now
With my own fancies play the merry fool,
And laugh away worse folly, being free.
Here will I seat myself, beside this old,
Hollow, and weedy oak, which ivy-twine
Clothes as with net-work: here will I couch my limbs,
Close by this river, in this silent shade,
As safe and sacred from the step of man
As an invisible world—unheard, unseen,
And listening only to the pebbly brook
That murmurs with a dead, yet tinkling sound;
Or to the bees, that in the neighbouring trunk
Make honey-hoards. The breeze, that visits me

Was never Love's accomplice, never raised
The tendril ringlets from the maiden's brow,
And the blue, delicate veins above her cheek;
Ne'er played the wanton—never half disclosed
The maiden's snowy bosom, scattering thence
Eye-poisons for some love-distempered youth,
Who ne'er henceforth may see an aspen-grove
Shiver in sunshine, but his feeble heart
Shall flow away like a dissolving thing.

Sweet breeze! thou only, if I guess aright,
Liftest the feathers of the robin's breast,
That swells its little breast, so full of song,
Singing above me, on the mountain-ash.
And thou too, desert stream! no pool of thine,
Though clear as lake in latest summer-eve,
Did e'er reflect the stately virgin's robe,
The face, the form divine, the downcast look
Contemplative! Behold! her open palm
Presses her cheek and brow! her elbow rests
On the bare branch of half-uprooted tree,
That leans towards its mirror! Who erewhile
Had from her countenance turned, or looked by stealth,
(For fear is true love's cruel nurse,) he now
With steadfast gaze and unoffending eye,
Worships the watery idol, dreaming hopes
Delicious to the soul, but fleeting, vain,
E'en as that phantom-world on which he gazed,
But not unheeded gazed: for see, ah! see,
The sportive tyrant with her left hand plucks
The heads of tall flowers that behind her grow,
Lychnis, and willow-herb, and fox-glove bells:
And suddenly, as one that toys with time,

Scatters them on the pool! Then all the charm
Is broken—all that phantom-world so fair
Vanishes, and a thousand circlets spread,
And each mis-shape the other. Stay awhile,
Poor youth, who scarcely dar'st lift up thine eyes,
The stream will soon renew its smoothness, soon
The visions will return! And lo! he stays:
And soon the fragments dim of lovely forms
Come trembling back, unite, and now once more
The pool becomes a mirror; and behold
Each wild-flower on the marge inverted there,
And there the half-uprooted tree—but where,
O where the virgin's snowy arm, that leaned
On its bare branch? He turns, and she is gone!
Homeward she steals through many a woodland maze
Which he shall seek in vain. Ill-fated youth!
Go, day by day, and waste thy manly prime
In mad love-yearning by the vacant brook,
Till sickly thoughts bewitch thine eyes, and thou
Behold'st her shadow still abiding there,
The Naiad of the mirror!

Not to thee,
O wild and desert stream! belongs this tale:
Gloomy and dark art thou—the crowded firs
Spire from thy shores, and stretch across thy bed,
Making thee doleful as a cavern-well:
Save when the shy king-fishers build their nest
On thy steep banks, no loves hast thou, wild stream!

This be my chosen haunt—emancipate
From passion's dreams, a freeman, and alone,
I rise and trace its devious course. O lead,

Lead me to deeper shades and lonelier glooms.
Lo! stealing through the canopy of firs,
How fair the sunshine spots that mossy rock,
Isle of the river, whose disparted waves
Dart off asunder with an angry sound,
How soon to re-unite! And see! they meet,
Each in the other lost and found: and see
Placeless, as spirits, one soft water-sun
Throbbing within them, heart at once and eye!
With its soft neighbourhood of filmy clouds,
The stains and shadings of forgotten tears,
Dimness o'erswum with lustre! Such the hour
Of deep enjoyment, following love's brief feuds;
And hark, the noise of a near waterfall!
I pass forth into light—I find myself
Beneath a weeping birch (most beautiful
Of forest-trees, the lady of the woods,)
Hard by the brink of a tall weedy rock
That overbrows the cataract. How bursts
The landscape on my sight! Two crescent hills
Fold in behind each other, and so make
A circular vale, and land-locked, as might seem,
With brook and bridge, and grey stone cottages,
Half hid by rocks and fruit-trees. At my feet,
The whortle-berries are bedewed with spray,
Dashed upwards by the furious waterfall.
How solemnly the pendant ivy-mass
Swings in its winnow; all the air is calm.
The smoke from cottage chimneys, tinged with light,
Rises in columns; from this house alone,
Close by the waterfall, the column slants,
And feels its ceaseless breeze. But what is this?
That cottage, with its slanting chimney-smoke,

And close beside its porch a sleeping child,
His dear head pillowed on a sleeping dog—
One arm between its fore legs, and the hand
Holds loosely its small handful of wild-flowers,
Unfilletted, and of unequal lengths.
A curious picture, with a master's haste
Sketched on a strip of pinky-silver skin,
Peeled from the birchen bark! Divinest maid!
Yon bark her canvass, and those purple berries
Her pencil! See, the juice is scarcely dried
On the fine skin! She has been newly here;
And lo! yon patch of heath has been her couch—
The pressure still remains! O blessed couch!
For this mayst thou flower early, and the sun,
Slanting at eve, rest bright, and linger long
Upon thy purple bells! O Isabel!
Daughter of genius! stateliest of our maids!
More beautiful than whom Alcæus wooed
The Lesbian woman of immortal song!
O child of genius! stately, beautiful,
And full of love to all, save only me,
And not ungentle e'en to me! My heart,
Why beats it thus? Through yonder coppice-wood
Needs must the pathway turn, that leads straightway
On to her father's house. She is alone!
The night draws on—such ways are hard to hit—
And fit it is I should restore this sketch,
Dropt unawares no doubt. Why should I yearn
To keep the relique? 'twill but idly feed
The passion that consumes me. Let me haste!
The picture in my hand which she has left;
She cannot blame me that I followed her:
And I may be her guide the long wood through.

THE NIGHT-SCENE.

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

Sandoval. You loved the daughter of Don Manrique?
Earl Henry. Loved?
Sandoval. Did you not say you wooed her?
Earl Henry. Once I loved
Her whom I dared not woo!
Sandoval. And wooed, perchance,
One whom you loved not!
Earl Henry. Oh! I were most base,
Not loving Oropeza. True, I wooed her,
Hoping to heal a deeper wound; but she
Met my advances with impassioned pride,
That kindled love with love. And when her sire,
Who in his dream of hope already grasped
The golden circlet in his hand, rejected
My suit with insult, and in memory
Of ancient feuds poured curses on my head,
Her blessings overtook and baffled them!
But thou art stern, and with unkindly countenance
Art inly reasoning whilst thou listenest to me.
Sandoval. Anxiously, Henry! reasoning anxiously.
But Oropeza—
Earl Henry. Blessings gather round her!
Within this wood there winds a secret passage,
Beneath the walls, which opens out at length
Into the gloomiest covert of the garden.—
The night ere my departure to the army,
She, nothing trembling, led me through that gloom,

And to that covert by a silent stream,
Which, with one star reflected near its marge,
Was the sole object visible around me.
No leaflet stirred; the air was almost sultry;
So deep, so dark, so close, the umbrage o'er us!
No leaflet stirred;—yet pleasure hung upon
The gloom and stillness of the balmy night-air.
A little further on an arbour stood,
Fragrant with flowering trees—I well remember
What an uncertain glimmer in the darkness
Their snow-white blossoms made—thither she led me,
To that sweet bower! Then Oropeza trembled—
I heard her heart beat—if 'twere not my own.

Sandoval. A rude and scaring note, my friend.

Earl Henry. Oh! no!

I have small memory of aught but pleasure.
The inquietudes of fear, like lesser streams
Still flowing, still were lost in those of love:
So love grew mightier from the fear, and Nature,
Fleeing from pain, sheltered herself in joy.
The stars above our heads were dim and steady,
Like eyes suffused with rapture.—Life was in us:
We were all life, each atom of our frames
A living soul—I vowed to die for her:
With the faint voice of one who, having spoken,
Relapses into blessedness, I vowed it:
That solemn vow, a whisper scarcely heard,
A murmur breathed against a lady's ear.
Oh! there is joy above the name of pleasure,
Deep self-possession, an intense repose.

Sandoval (*with a sarcastic smile*). No other than as eastern sages paint,
The God, who floats upon a lotos leaf,

Dreams for a thousand ages; then awaking,
Creates a world, and smiling at the bubble,
Relapses into bliss.

Earl Henry. Ah! was that bliss
Feared as an alien, and too vast for man?
For suddenly, impatient of its silence,
Did Oropeza, starting, grasp my forehead.
I caught her arms; the veins were swelling on them.
Through the dark bower she sent a hollow voice;—
"Oh! what if all betray me? what if thou?"
I swore, and with an inward thought that seemed
The purpose and the substance of my being,
I swore to her, that were she red with guilt,
I would exchange my unblenched state with hers.—
Friend! by that winding passage, to that bower
I now will go—all objects there will teach me
Unwavering love, and singleness of heart.
Go, Sandoval! I am prepared to meet her—
Say nothing of me—I myself will seek her—
Nay, leave me, friend! I cannot bear the torment
And keen inquiry of that scanning eye.—

[Earl Henry *retires into the wood.*

Sandoval (*alone*). O Henry! always striv'st thou to be great
By thine own act—yet art thou never great
But by the inspiration of great passion.
The whirl-blast comes, the desert-sands rise up
And shape themselves: from earth to heaven they stand,
As though they were the pillars of a temple,
Built by Omnipotence in its own honour!
But the blast pauses, and their shaping spirit
Is fled: the mighty columns were but sand,
And lazy snakes trail o'er the level ruins!

LINES COMPOSED IN A CONCERT-ROOM.

Nor cold, nor stern, my soul! yet I detest
These scented rooms, where, to a gaudy throng,
Heaves the proud harlot her distended breast
In intricacies of laborious song.

These feel not Music's genuine power, nor deign
To melt at Nature's passion-warbled plaint;
But when the long-breathed singer's uptrilled strain
Bursts in a squall—they gape for wonderment.

Hark! the deep buzz of vanity and hate!
Scornful, yet envious, with self-torturing sneer
My lady eyes some maid of humbler state,
While the pert captain, or the primmer priest,
Prattles accordant scandal in her ear.

O give me, from this heartless scene released,
To hear our old musician, blind and gray,
(Whom stretching from my nurse's arms I kissed,)
His Scottish tunes and warlike marches play,
By moonshine, on the balmy summer-night,
The while I dance amid the tedded hay
With merry maids, whose ringlets toss in light.

Or lies the purple evening on the bay
Of the calm glossy lake, O let me hide
Unheard, unseen, behind the alder-trees,
For round their roots the fisher's boat is tied,

On whose trim seat doth Edmund stretch at ease
And while the lazy boat sways to and fro,
Breathes in his flute sad airs, so wild and slow,
That his own cheek is wet with quiet tears.

But O, dear Anne! when midnight wind careers,
And the gust pelting on the out-house shed
Makes the cock shrilly on the rain storm crow,
To hear thee sing some ballad full of woe,
Ballad of ship-wrecked sailor floating dead,
Whom his own true-love buried in the sands!
Thee, gentle woman, for thy voice re-measures
Whatever tones and melancholy pleasures
The things of Nature utter; birds or trees
Or moan of ocean-gale in weedy caves,
Or where the stiff grass 'mid the heath-plant waves,
Murmur and music thin of sudden breeze.

1799.

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION.

Do you ask what the birds say? The sparrow, the dove,
The linnet and thrush say, "I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent—the wind is so strong;
What it says, I don't know, but it sings a loud song.
But green leaves, and blossoms, and sunny warm weather,
And singing, and loving—all come back together.
But the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings; and for ever sings he—
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me!"

1798-9.

TO A LADY.

WITH FALCONER'S "SHIPWRECK."

Ah! not by Cam or Isis, famous streams
In arched groves, the youthful poet's choice;
Nor while half-listening, 'mid delicious dreams,
To harp and song from lady's hand and voice;

Nor yet while gazing in sublimer mood
On cliff, or cataract, in Alpine dell;
Nor in dim cave with bladdery sea-weed strewed,
Framing wild fancies to the ocean's swell;

Our sea-bard sang this song! which still he sings,
And sings for thee, sweet friend! Hark, Pity, hark!
Now mounts, now totters on the tempest's wings,
Now groans, and shivers, the replunging bark!

"Cling to the shrouds!" In vain! The breakers roar—
Death shrieks! With two alone of all his clan
Forlorn the poet paced the Grecian shore,
No classic roamer, but a ship-wrecked man!

Say then, what muse inspired these genial strains
And lit his spirit to so bright a flame?
The elevating thought of suffered pains,
Which gentle hearts shall mourn; but chief, the name

Of gratitude! remembrances of friend,
Or absent or no more! shades of the Past,
Which Love makes substance! Hence to thee I send,
O dear as long as life and memory last!

I send with deep regards of heart and head,
Sweet maid, for friendship formed! this work to thee:
And thou, the while thou canst not choose but shed
A tear for Falconer, wilt remember me.

TO A YOUNG LADY.

ON HER RECOVERY FROM A FEVER.

Why need I say, Louisa dear!
How glad I am to see you here,
A lovely convalescent;
Risen from the bed of pain and fear,
And feverish heat incessant.

The sunny showers, the dappled sky,
The little birds that warble high,
Their vernal loves commencing,
Will better welcome you than I
With their sweet influencing.

Believe me, while in bed you lay,
Your danger taught us all to pray:
You made us grow devouter!
Each eye looked up and seemed to say,
How can we do without her?

Besides, what vexed us worse, we knew,
They have no need of such as you
In the place where you were going:
This world has angels all too few,
And Heaven is overflowing!

1799.

INTRODUCTION TO THE TALE OF THE DARK LADIE.

O LEAVE the lily on its stem;
O leave the rose upon the spray;
O leave the elder bloom, fair maids!
And listen to my lay.

A cypress and a myrtle-bough
This morn around my harp you twined,
Because it fashioned mournfully
Its murmurs in the wind.

And now a tale of love and woe,
A woeful tale of love I sing;
Hark, gentle maidens! hark, it sighs
And trembles on the string.

But most, my own dear Genevieve,
It sighs and trembles most for thee!
O come and hear the cruel wrongs,
Befell the Dark Ladie!*

* * * * * *

And now, once more a tale of woe,
A woeful tale of love I sing;
For thee, my Genevieve, it sighs,
And trembles on the string.

* Here followed the Stanzas, afterwards published separately under the title "Love" (see p. 198), and after them came the other three stanzas printed above; the whole forming the introduction to the intended Dark Ladie, of which all that exists is subjoined.

When last I sang the cruel scorn,
That crazed this bold and lovely knight,
And how he roamed the mountain woods,
Nor rested day nor night;

I promised thee a sister tale,
Of man's perfidious cruelty;
Come then, and hear what cruel wrong
Befell the Dark Ladie.

THE BALLAD OF THE DARK LADIE.

A FRAGMENT.

Beneath yon birch with silver bark,
And boughs so pendulous and fair,
The brook falls scattered down the rock:
And all is mossy there!

And there upon the moss she sits,
The Dark Ladie in silent pain;
The heavy tear is in her eye,
And drops and swells again.

Three times she sends her little page
Up the castled mountain's breast,
If he might find the Knight that wears
The Griffin for his crest.

The sun was sloping down the sky,
And she had lingered there all day,
Counting moments, dreaming fears—
O wherefore can he stay?

She hears a rustling o'er the brook,
She sees far off a swinging bough!
"'Tis He! 'Tis my betrothed Knight!
Lord Falkland, is it Thou!"

She springs, she clasps him round the neck,
She sobs a thousand hopes and fears,
Her kisses glowing on his cheeks
She quenches with her tears.

* * * * * *

"My friends with rude ungentle words
They scoff and bid me fly to thee!
O give me shelter in thy breast!
O shield and shelter me!

"My Henry, I have given thee much,
I gave what I can ne'er recall,
I gave my heart, I gave my peace,
O Heaven! I gave thee all."

The Knight made answer to the Maid,
While to his heart he held her hand,
"Nine castles hath my noble sire,
None statelier in the land.

"The fairest one shall be my love's,
The fairest castle of the nine!
Wait only till the stars peep out,
The fairest shall be thine

"Wait only till the hand of eve
Hath wholly closed yon western bars,
And through the dark we two will steal
Beneath the twinkling stars!"—

"The dark? the dark? No! not the dark?
The twinkling stars? How, Henry? How?
O God! 'twas in the eye of noon
He pledged his sacred vow!

"And in the eye of noon, my love,
Shall lead me from my mother's door,
Sweet boys and girls all clothed in white
Strewing flow'rs before:

"But first the nodding minstrels go
With music meet for lordly bow'rs,
The children next in snow-white vests,
Strewing buds and flow'rs!

"And then my love and I shall pace,
My jet black hair in pearly braids,
Between our comely bachelors
And blushing bridal maids."

* * * * * *

1799.

THE DAY-DREAM.

FROM AN EMIGRANT TO HIS ABSENT WIFE.

If thou wert here, these tears were tears of light!
  But from as sweet a vision did I start
As ever made these eyes grow idly bright!
  And though I weep, yet still around my heart
A sweet and playful tenderness doth linger,
Touching my heart as with an infant's finger.

My mouth half open, like a witless man,
  I saw our couch, I saw our quiet room,
  Its shadows heaving by the fire-light gloom;
And o'er my lips a subtle feeling ran,
All o'er my lips a soft and breeze-like feeling—
I know not what—but had the same been stealing

Upon a sleeping mother's lips, I guess
  It would have made the loving mother dream
That she was softly bending down to kiss
  Her babe, that something more than babe did seem,
A floating presence of its darling father,
And yet its own dear baby self far rather!

Across my chest there lay a weight, so warm!
  As if some bird had taken shelter there;
And lo! I seemed to see a woman's form—
  Thine, Sara, thine? O joy, if thine it were!
I gazed with stifled breath, and feared to stir it,
No deeper trance e'er wrapt a yearning spirit!

And now when I seemed sure thy face to see,
Thy own dear self in our own quiet home;
There came an elfish laugh, and wakened me:
'Twas Frederic, who behind my chair had clomb,
And with his bright eyes at my face was peeping.
I blessed him, tried to laugh, and fell a weeping!*

1798-9.

SOMETHING CHILDISH, BUT VERY NATURAL.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY.

If I had but two little wings,
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear!
But thoughts like these are idle things,
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly:
I'm always with you in my sleep!
The world is all one's own.
But then one wakes, and where am I?
All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids:
So I love to wake ere break of day:
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

1798-9.

* See Note.

ON REVISITING THE SEA-SHORE.

AFTER LONG ABSENCE, UNDER STRONG MEDICAL RECOMMENDATION NOT TO BATHE.

God be with thee, gladsome Ocean!
How gladly greet I thee once more!
Ships and waves, and ceaseless motion,
And men rejoicing on thy shore.

Dissuading spake the mild physician,
"Those briny waves for thee are death!"
But my soul fulfilled her mission,
And lo! I breathe untroubled breath!

Fashion's pining sons and daughters,
That seek the crowd they seem to fly,
Trembling they approach thy waters;
And what cares Nature, if they die?

Me a thousand hopes and pleasures,
A thousand recollections bland,
Thoughts sublime, and stately measures,
Revisit on thy echoing strand:

Dreams, (the soul herself forsaking,)
Tearful raptures, boyish mirth;
Silent adorations, making
A blessed shadow of this Earth!

O ye hopes, that stir within me,
Health comes with you from above!
God is with me, God is in me!
I cannot die, if Life be Love.

1801.

The tedded hay, the first fruits of the soil,
The tedded hay and corn-sheaves in one field,
Show summer gone, ere come. The foxglove tall
Sheds its loose purple bells, or in the gust,
Or when it bends beneath the up-springing lark,
Or mountain-finch alighting. And the rose
(In vain the darling of successful love)
Stands, like some boasted beauty of past years,
The thorns remaining, and the flowers all gone.
Nor can I find amid my lonely walk
By rivulet, or spring, or wet road-side,
That blue and bright-eyed floweret of the brook,
Hope's gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not!*
So will not fade the flowers which Emmeline
With delicate fingers on the snow-white silk
Has worked, (the flowers which most she knew I loved,)
And, more beloved than they, her auburn hair.

In the cool morning twilight, early waked
By her full bosom's joyous restlessness,
Softly she rose, and lightly stole along,
Down the slope coppice to the woodbine bower,
Whose rich flowers, swinging in the morning breeze,
Over their dim fast-moving shadows hung,
Making a quiet image of disquiet
In the smooth, scarcely moving river-pool.
There, in that bower where first she owned her love,

* One of the names (and meriting to be the only one) of the *Myosotis Scorpioides Palustris*, a flower from six to twelve inches high, with blue blossom and bright yellow eye. It has the same name over the whole Empire of Germany (*Vergissmein nicht*) and, I believe, in Denmark and Sweden.

And let me kiss my own warm tear of joy
From off her glowing cheek, she sate and stretched
The silk upon the frame, and worked her name
Between the Moss-Rose and Forget-me-not—
Her own dear name, with her own auburn hair!
That forced to wander till sweet spring return,
I yet might ne'er forget her smile, her look,
Her voice, (that even in her mirthful mood
Has made me wish to steal away and weep,)
Nor yet the entrancement of that maiden kiss
With which she promised, that when spring returned,
She would resign one half of that dear name,
And own thenceforth no other name but mine!

1801.

THE VISIONARY HOPE.

Sad lot, to have no hope! Though lowly kneeling
He fain would frame a prayer within his breast,
Would fain entreat for some sweet breath of healing,
That his sick body might have ease and rest;
He strove in vain! the dull sighs from his chest
Against his will the stifling load revealing,
Though Nature forced; though like some captive guest,
Some royal prisoner at his conqueror's feast,
An alien's restless mood but half concealing,
The sternness on his gentle brow confessed,
Sickness within and miserable feeling;
Though obscure pangs made curses of his dreams,
And dreaded sleep, each night repelled in vain,
Each night was scattered by its own loud screams:
Yet never could his heart command, though fain,
One deep full wish to be no more in pain.

That Hope, which was his inward bliss and boast,
Which waned and died, yet ever near him stood,
Though changed in nature, wander where he would—
For Love's despair is but Hope's pining ghost!
For this one hope he makes his hourly moan,
He wishes and can wish for this alone!
Pierced, as with light from Heaven, before it gleams
(So the love-stricken visionary deems)
Disease would vanish, like a summer shower,
Whose dews fling sunshine from the noon-tide bower!
Or let it stay! yet this one Hope should give
Such strength that he would bless his pains and live.

HOME-SICK.

WRITTEN IN GERMANY.

'Tis sweet to him, who all the week
Through city-crowds must push his way,
To stroll alone through fields and woods,
And hallow thus the Sabbath-day.

And sweet it is, in summer bower,
Sincere, affectionate and gay,
One's own dear children feasting round,
To celebrate one's marriage-day.

But what is all, to his delight,
Who having long been doomed to roam,
Throws off the bundle from his back,
Before the door of his own home?

Home-sickness is a wasting pang;
This feel I hourly more and more:
There's healing only in thy wings,
Thou Breeze that play'st on Albion's shore!

1798-9.

THE HAPPY HUSBAND.

Oft, oft methinks, the while with Thee
I breathe, as from the heart, thy dear
And dedicated name, I hear
A promise and a mystery,
A pledge of more than passing life,
Yea, in that very name of Wife!

A pulse of love, that ne'er can sleep!
A feeling that upbraids the heart
With happiness beyond desert,
That gladness half requests to weep!
Nor bless I not the keener sense
And unalarming turbulence

Of transient joys, that ask no sting
From jealous fears, or coy denying;
But born beneath Love's brooding wing,
And into tenderness soon dying,
Wheel out their giddy moment, then
Resign the soul to love again;—

A more precipitated vein
Of notes, that eddy in the flow
Of smoothest song, they come, they go,
And leave their sweeter understrain
Its own sweet self—a love of Thee
That seems, yet cannot greater be! 1806.

RECOLLECTIONS OF LOVE.

I.

How warm this woodland wild Recess!
Love surely hath been breathing here;
And this sweet bed of heath, my dear!
Swells up, then sinks with faint caress,
As if to have you yet more near.

II.

Eight springs have flown, since last I lay
On sea-ward Quantock's heathy hills,
Where quiet sounds from hidden rills
Float here and there, like things astray,
And high o'er head the sky-lark shrills.

III.

No voice as yet had made the air
Be music with your name; yet why
That asking look? that yearning sigh?
That sense of promise every where?
Beloved! flew your spirit by?

IV.

As when a mother doth explore
The rose-mark on her long lost child,
I met, I loved you, maiden mild!
As whom I long had loved before—
So deeply, had I been beguiled.

V.

You stood before me like a thought,
A dream remembered in a dream.
But when those meek eyes first did seem
To tell me, Love within you wrought—
O Greta, dear domestic stream!

VI.

Has not, since then, Love's prompture deep,
Has not Love's whisper evermore
Been ceaseless, as thy gentle roar?
Sole voice, when other voices sleep,
Dear under-song in clamor's hour.

1806.

THE PANG MORE SHARP THAN ALL.

AN ALLEGORY.

I.

He too has flitted from his secret nest,
Hope's last and dearest Child without a name!—
Has flitted from me, like the warmthless flame,
That makes false promise of a place of rest
To the tir'd Pilgrim's still believing mind;—
Or like some Elfin Knight in kingly court,
Who having won all guerdons in his sport,
Glides out of view, and whither none can find!

II.

Yes! He hath flitted from me—with what aim,
Or why, I know not! 'Twas a home of bliss,
And he was innocent, as the pretty shame
Of babe, that tempts and shuns the menaced kiss,
From its twy-cluster'd hiding place of snow!
Pure as the babe, I ween, and all aglow
As the dear hopes, that swell the mother's breast—
Her eyes down gazing o'er her clasped charge;—

Yet gay as that twice happy father's kiss,
That well might glance aside, yet never miss,
Where the sweet mark emboss'd so sweet a targe—
Twice wretched he who hath been doubly blest!

III.

Like a loose blossom on a gusty night
He flitted from me—and has left behind
(As if to them his faith he ne'er did plight)
Of either sex and answerable mind
Two playmates, twin-births of his foster-dame:—
The one a steady lad (Esteem he hight)
And Kindness is the gentler sister's name.
Dim likeness now, tho' fair she be and good,
Of that bright Boy who hath us all forsook;—
But in his full-eyed aspect when he stood,
And while her face reflected every look,
And in reflection kindled—she became
So like Him, that almost she seem'd the same!

IV.

Ah! He is gone, and yet will not depart!—
Is with me still, yet I from Him exil'd!
For still there lives within my secret heart
The magic image of the magic Child,
Which there He made up-grow by his strong art
As in that crystal* orb—wise Merlin's feat,—
The wondrous "World of Glass," wherein inisl'd
All long'd for things their beings did repeat
And there He left it, like a Sylph beguiled,
To live and yearn and languish incomplete!

* Faerie Queene, B. III. C. 2. S. 19.

V.

Can wit of man a heavier grief reveal?
Can sharper pang from hate or scorn arise?—
Yes! one more sharp there is that deeper lies,
Which fond Esteem but mocks when he would heal.
Yet neither scorn nor hate did it devise,
But sad compassion and atoning zeal!
One pang more blighting-keen than hope betray'd!
And this it is my woful hap to feel,
When at her Brother's hest, the twin-born Maid
With face averted and unsteady eyes,
Her truant playmate's faded robe puts on;
And inly shrinking from her own disguise
Enacts the faery Boy that's lost and gone.
O worse than all! O pang all pangs above
Is Kindness counterfeiting absent Love!

III.—MEDITATIVE POEMS.

IN BLANK VERSE.

Yea, he deserves to find himself deceived,
Who seeks a Heart in the unthinking Man.
Like shadows on a stream, the forms of life
Impress their characters on the smooth forehead:
Nought sinks into the bosom's silent depth.
Quick sensibility of pain and pleasure
Moves the light fluids lightly; but no soul
Warmeth the inner frame.—SCHILLER.

REFLECTIONS

ON HAVING LEFT A PLACE OF RETIREMENT.

Sermoni propriora.—HOR.

Low was our pretty Cot: our tallest rose
Peeped at the chamber-window. We could hear
At silent noon, and eve, and early morn,
The sea's faint murmur. In the open air
Our myrtles blossomed; and across the porch
Thick jasmins twined: the little landscape round
Was green and woody, and refreshed the eye.
It was a spot which you might aptly call
The Valley of Seclusion! Once I saw
(Hallowing his Sabbath-day by quietness)
A wealthy son of commerce saunter by,
Bristowa's citizen: methought, it calmed
His thirst of idle gold, and made him muse
With wiser feelings: for he paused, and looked
With a pleased sadness, and gazed all around,
Then eyed our Cottage, and gazed round again,
And sighed, and said, it was a Blessed Place.

And we were blessed. Oft with patient ear
Long-listening to the viewless sky-lark's note
(Viewless, or haply for a moment seen
Gleaming on sunny wings) in whispered tones
I've said to my beloved, "Such, sweet girl!
The inobtrusive song of happiness,
Unearthly minstrelsy! then only heard
When the soul seeks to hear; when all is hushed,
And the heart listens!"

But the time, when first
From that low dell, steep up the stony mount
I climbed with perilous toil and reached the top,
Oh! what a goodly scene! Here the bleak mount,
The bare bleak mountain speckled thin with sheep;
Gray clouds, that shadowing spot the sunny fields;
And river, now with bushy rocks o'erbrowed,
Now winding bright and full, with naked banks;
And seats, and lawns, the Abbey and the wood,
And cots, and hamlets, and faint city-spire;
The Channel there, the Islands and white sails,
Dim coasts, and cloud-like hills, and shoreless Ocean—
It seemed like Omnipresence! God, methought,
Had built him there a temple: the whole World
Seemed imaged in its vast circumference,
No wish profaned my overwhelmed heart.
Blest hour! It was a luxury,—to be!

Ah! quiet dell! dear Cot, and mount sublime!
I was constrained to quit you. Was it right,
While my unnumbered brethren toiled and bled,
That I should dream away the entrusted hours
On rose-leaf beds, pampĕring the coward heart

With feelings all too delicate for use?
Sweet is the tear that from some Howard's eye
Drops on the cheek of one he lifts from earth:
And he that works me good with unmoved face,
Does it but half: he chills me while he aids,
My benefactor, not my brother man!
Yet even this, this cold beneficence
Praise, praise it, O my soul! oft as thou scann'st
The sluggard Pity's vision-weaving tribe!
Who sigh for wretchedness, yet shun the wretched,
Nursing in some delicious solitude
Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies!
I therefore go, and join head, heart, and hand,
Active and firm, to fight the bloodless fight
Of science, freedom, and the truth in Christ.

Yet oft when after honourable toil
Rests the tired mind, and waking loves to dream,
My spirit shall revisit thee, dear Cot!
Thy jasmin and thy window-peeping rose,
And myrtles fearless of the mild sea-air.
And I shall sigh fond wishes—sweet abode!
Ah!—had none greater! And that all had such!
It might be so—but the time is not yet.
Speed it, O Father! Let thy kingdom come!

1796.

ON OBSERVING A BLOSSOM ON THE FIRST OF FEBRUARY, 1796.

Sweet Flower! that peeping from thy russet stem
Unfoldest timidly, (for in strange sort
This dark, frieze-coated, hoarse, teeth-chattering Month
Hath borrowed Zephyr's voice, and gazed upon thee
With blue voluptuous eye) alas, poor Flower!
These are but flatteries of the faithless year.
Perchance, escaped its unknown polar cave,
E'en now the keen North-East is on its way.
Flower that must perish! shall I liken thee
To some sweet girl of too, too rapid growth
Nipped by consumption 'mid untimely charms?
Or to Bristowa's bard,* the wondrous boy!
An amaranth, which Earth scarce seemed to own,
Till disappointment came, and pelting wrong
Beat it to Earth? or with indignant grief
Shall I compare thee to poor Poland's hope,
Bright flower of Hope killed in the opening bud?
Farewell, sweet blossom! better fate be thine
And mock my boding! Dim similitudes
Weaving in moral strains, I've stolen one hour
From anxious self, Life's cruel task-master!
And the warm wooings of this sunny day
Tremble along my frame, and harmonise
The attempered organ, that even saddest thoughts
Mix with some sweet sensations, like harsh tunes
Played deftly on a soft-toned instrument.

* Chatterton.

THE EOLIAN HARP.

COMPOSED AT CLEVEDON, SOMERSETSHIRE.

My pensive Sara! thy soft cheek reclined
Thus on mine arm, most soothing sweet it is
To sit beside our cot, our cot o'ergrown
With white-flowered jasmin, and the broad-leaved myrtle,
(Meet emblems they of Innocence and Love!)
And watch the clouds, that late were rich with light,
Slow saddening round, and mark the star of eve
Serenely brilliant (such should wisdom be)
Shine opposite! How exquisite the scents
Snatched from yon bean-field! and the world so hushed!
The stilly murmur of the distant sea
Tells us of silence.

And that simplest lute,
Placed length-ways in the clasping casement, hark!
How by the desultory breeze caressed,
Like some coy maid half yielding to her lover,
It pours such sweet upbraiding, as must needs
Tempt to repeat the wrong! And now, its strings
Boldlier swept, the long sequacious notes
Over delicious surges sink and rise,
Such a soft floating witchery of sound
As twilight Elfins make, when they at eve
Voyage on gentle gales from Fairy-Land,
Where Melodies round honey-dropping flowers,
Footless and wild, like birds of Paradise,
Nor pause, nor perch, hovering on untamed wing!

O the one life within us and abroad,
Which meets all motion and becomes its soul,
A light in sound, a sound-like power in light
Rhythm in all thought, and joyance every where—
Methinks, it should have been impossible
Not to love all things in a world so filled;
Where the breeze warbles, and the mute still air
Is Music slumbering on her instrument.

And thus, my love! as on the midway slope
Of yonder hill I stretch my limbs at noon,
Whilst through my half-closed eye-lids I behold
The sunbeams dance, like diamonds, on the main,
And tranquil muse upon tranquillity;
Full many a thought uncalled and undetained,
And many idle flitting phantasies,
Traverse my indolent and passive brain,
As wild and various as the random gales
That swell and flutter on this subject lute!

And what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the Soul of each, and God of All?

But thy more serious eye a mild reproof
Darts, O beloved woman! nor such thoughts
Dim and unhallowed dost thou not reject,
And biddest me walk humbly with my God.
Meek daughter in the family of Christ!
Well hast thou said and holily dispraised
These shapings of the unregenerate mind;

Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break
On vain Philosophy's aye-babbling spring.
For never guiltless may I speak of Him,
The Incomprehensible! save when with awe
I praise him, and with Faith that inly feels;
Who with his saving mercies healed me,
A sinful and most miserable man,
Wildered and dark, and gave me to possess
Peace, and this cot, and thee, heart-honoured Maid!

1796–1828.

TO THE REV. GEORGE COLERIDGE

OF OTTERY ST. MARY, DEVON. WITH SOME POEMS.

Notus in fratres animi paterni.
HOR. Carm. lib. 1. 2.

A BLESSED lot hath he, who having passed
His youth and early manhood in the stir
And turmoil of the world, retreats at length,
With cares that move, not agitate the heart,
To the same dwelling where his father dwelt;
And haply views his tottering little ones
Embrace those aged knees and climb that lap,
On which first kneeling his own infancy
Lisped its brief prayer. Such, O my earliest Friend!
Thy lot and such thy brothers too enjoy.
At distance did ye climb life's upland road,
Yet cheered and cheering: now fraternal love
Hath drawn you to one centre. Be your days
Holy, and blest and blessing may ye live.

To me the Eternal Wisdom hath dispensed
A different fortune and more different mind—

Me from the spot where first I sprang to light
Too soon transplanted, ere my soul had fixed
Its first domestic loves; and hence through life
Chasing chance-started friendships. A brief while
Some have preserved me from life's pelting ills;
But, like a tree with leaves of feeble stem,
If the clouds lasted, and a sudden breeze
Ruffled the boughs, they on my head at once
Dropped the collected shower; and some most false,
False and fair foliaged as the Manchineel,
Have tempted me to slumber in their shade
E'en 'mid the storm; then breathing subtlest damps,
Mixed their own venom with the rain from Heaven,
That I woke poisoned! But, all praise to Him
Who gives us all things, more have yielded me
Permanent shelter; and beside one friend,
Beneath the impervious covert of one oak,
I've raised a lowly shed, and know the names
Of husband and of father; not unhearing
Of that divine and nightly-whispering voice,
Which from my childhood to maturer years
Spake to me of predestinated wreaths,
Bright with no fading colours!

Yet at times
My soul is sad, that I have roamed through life
Still most a stranger, most with naked heart
At mine own home and birth-place: chiefly then,
When I remember thee, my earliest friend!
Thee, who didst watch my boyhood and my youth;
Didst trace my wanderings with a father's eye;
And boding evil yet still hoping good,
Rebuked each fault, and over all my woes

Sorrowed in silence! He who counts alone
The beatings of the solitary heart,
That Being knows, how I have loved thee ever,
Loved as a brother, as a son revered thee!
Oh! 'tis to me an ever new delight,
To talk of thee and thine: or when the blast
Of the shrill winter, rattling our rude sash,
Endears the cleanly hearth and social bowl;
Or when as now, on some delicious eve,
We in our sweet sequestered orchard-plot
Sit on the tree crooked earth-ward; whose old boughs,
That hang above us in an arborous roof,
Stirred by the faint gale of departing May,
Send their loose blossoms slanting o'er our heads!

Nor dost not thou sometimes recall those hours,
When with the joy of hope thou gav'st thine ear
To my wild firstling-lays. Since then my song
Hath sounded deeper notes, such as beseem
Or that sad wisdom folly leaves behind,
Or such as, tuned to these tumultuous times,
Cope with the tempest's swell!

These various strains,
Which I have framed in many a various mood,
Accept, my brother! and (for some perchance
Will strike discordant on thy milder mind)
If aught of error or intemperate truth
Should meet thine ear, think thou that riper age
Will calm it down, and let thy love forgive it!

1797.

TO A FRIEND

WHO HAD DECLARED HIS INTENTION OF WRITING NO MORE POETRY.

Dear Charles! whilst yet thou wert a babe, I ween
That Genius plunged thee in that wizard fount
Hight Castalie: and (sureties of thy faith)
That Pity and Simplicity stood by,
And promised for thee, that thou shouldst renounce
The world's low cares and lying vanities,
Steadfast and rooted in the heavenly Muse,
And washed and sanctified to Poesy.
Yes—thou wert plunged, but with forgetful hand
Held, as by Thetis erst her warrior son:
And with those recreant unbaptised heels
Thou'rt flying from thy bounden minist'ries—
So sore it seems and burthensome a task
To weave unwithering flowers! But take thou heed:
For thou art vulnerable, wild-eyed boy,
And I have arrows* mystically dipt,
Such as may stop thy speed. Is thy Burns dead?
And shall he die unwept, and sink to earth
"Without the meed of one melodious tear?"
Thy Burns, and Nature's own beloved bard,
Who to the "Illustrious† of his native Land
So properly did look for patronage."
Ghost of Mæcenas! hide thy blushing face!
They snatched him from the sickle and the plough—
To gauge ale-firkins.

* Pind. Olymp. ii. 1. 150.

† Verbatim from Burns' dedication of his Poem to the Nobility and Gentry of the Caledonian Hunt.

Oh! for shame return!
On a bleak rock, midway the Aonian mount,
There stands a lone and melancholy tree,
Whose aged branches to the midnight blast
Make solemn music: pluck its darkest bough,
Ere yet the unwholesome night-dew be exhaled,
And weeping wreathe it round thy Poet's tomb.
Then in the outskirts, where pollutions grow,
Pick the rank henbane and the dusky flowers
Of night-shade, or its red and tempting fruit,
These with stopped nostril and glove-guarded hand
Knit in nice intermixture, so to twine,
The illustrious brow of Scotch Nobility.

1796.

THIS LIME-TREE BOWER MY PRISON.

In the June of 1797, some long-expected Friends paid a visit to the author's cottage; and on the morning of their arrival, he met with an accident, which disabled him from walking during the whole time of their stay. One evening, when they had left him for a few hours, he composed the following lines in the garden-bower.

Well, they are gone, and here must I remain,
This lime-tree bower my prison! I have lost
Beauties and feelings, such as would have been
Most sweet to my remembrance even when age
Had dimmed mine eyes to blindness. They, meanwhile
Friends, whom I never more may meet again,
On springy heath, along the hill-top edge,
Wander in gladness, and wind down, perchance,
To that still roaring dell, of which I told:
The roaring dell, o'erwooded, narrow, deep,

And only speckled by the mid-day sun;
Where its slim trunk the ash from rock to rock
Flings arching like a bridge;—that branchless ash,
Unsunned and damp, whose few poor yellow leaves
Ne'er tremble in the gale, yet tremble still,
Fanned by the water-fall! and there my friends
Behold the dark green file of long lank weeds,*
That all at once (a most fantastic sight!)
Still nod and drip beneath the dripping edge
Of the blue clay-stone.

Now, my friends emerge
Beneath the wide wide Heaven—and view again
The many-steepled tract magnificent
Of hilly fields and meadows, and the sea,
With some fair bark, perhaps, whose sails light up
The slip of smooth clear blue betwixt two Isles
Of purple shadow! Yes! they wander on
In gladness all; but thou, methinks, most glad,
My gentle-hearted Charles! for thou hast pined
And hungered after Nature, many a year,
In the great City pent, winning thy way
With sad yet patient soul, through evil and pain
And strange calamity! Ah, slowly sink
Behind the western ridge, thou glorious sun!
Shine in the slant beams of the sinking orb,
Ye purple heath-flowers! richlier burn, ye clouds!
Live in the yellow light, ye distant groves!
And kindle, thou blue ocean! So my Friend
Struck with deep joy may stand, as I have stood,

* *Of long lank weeds.*] The asplenium scolopendrium, called in some countries the Adder's Tongue, in others the Hart's Tongue: but Withering gives the Adder's Tongue as the trivial name of the ophioglossum only.

Silent with swimming sense; yea, gazing round
On the wide landscape, gaze till all doth seem
Less gross than bodily; and of such hues
As veil the Almighty Spirit, when yet he makes
Spirits perceive his presence.

A delight
Comes sudden on my heart, and I am glad
As I myself were there! Nor in this bower,
This little lime-tree bower, have I not marked
Much that has soothed me. Pale beneath the blaze
Hung the transparent foliage; and I watched
Some broad and sunny leaf, and loved to see
The shadow of the leaf and stem above
Dappling its sunshine! And that walnut-tree
Was richly tinged, and a deep radiance lay
Full on the ancient ivy, which usurps
Those fronting elms, and now, with blackest mass
Makes their dark branches gleam a lighter hue
Through the late twilight: and though now the bat
Wheels silent by, and not a swallow twitters,
Yet still the solitary humble bee
Sings in the bean-flower! Henceforth I shall know
That Nature ne'er deserts the wise and pure;
No plot so narrow, be but Nature there,
No waste so vacant, but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake to Love and Beauty! and sometimes
'Tis well to be bereft of promised good,
That we may lift the Soul, and contemplate
With lively joy the joys we cannot share.
My gentle-hearted Charles! when the last rook
Beat its straight path along the dusky air

Homewards, I blest it! deeming, its black wing
(Now a dim speck, now vanishing in light)
Had crossed the mighty orb's dilated glory,
While thou stood'st gazing; or when all was still,
* Flew creeking o'er thy head, and had a charm
For thee, my gentle-hearted Charles, to whom
No sound is dissonant which tells of Life.

1797.

FROST AT MIDNIGHT.

The frost performs its secret ministry,
Unhelped by any wind. The owlet's cry
Came loud—and hark, again! loud as before.
The inmates of my cottage, all at rest,
Have left me to that solitude, which suits
Abstruser musings: save that at my side
My cradled infant slumbers peacefully.
'Tis calm indeed! so calm, that it disturbs
And vexes meditation with its strange
And extreme silentness. Sea, hill, and wood,
This populous village! Sea, and hill, and wood,
With all the numberless goings on of life,
Inaudible as dreams! the thin blue flame
Lies on my low burnt fire, and quivers not;
Only that film, which fluttered on the grate,

* *Flew creeking.*] Some months after I had written this line, it gave me pleasure to find that Bartram had observed the same circumstance of the Savanna Crane. "When these Birds move their wings in flight, their strokes are slow, moderate and regular; and even when at a considerable distance or high above us, we plainly hear the quill-feathers; their shafts and webs upon one another creek as the joints or working of a vessel in a tempestuous sea."

Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks, its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling Spirit
By its own moods interprets, every where
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of Thought.

But O! how oft,
How oft, at school, with most believing mind,
Presageful, have I gazed upon the bars,
To watch that fluttering stranger! and as oft
With unclosed lids, already had I dreamt
Of my sweet birth-place, and the old church-tower,
Whose bells, the poor man's only music, rang
From morn to evening, all the hot Fair-day,
So sweetly, that they stirred and haunted me
With a wild pleasure, falling on mine ear
Most like articulate sounds of things to come!
So gazed I, till the soothing things I dreamt
Lulled me to sleep, and sleep prolonged my dreams!
And so I brooded all the following morn,
Awed by the stern preceptor's face, mine eye
Fixed with mock study on my swimming book:
Save if the door half opened, and I snatched
A hasty glance, and still my heart leaped up,
For still I hoped to see the stranger's face,
Townsman, or aunt, or sister more beloved,
My play-mate when we both were clothed alike!

Dear babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,
Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm,

Fill up the interspersed vacancies
And momentary pauses of the thought!
My babe so beautiful! it thrills my heart
With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,
And think that thou shalt learn far other lore
And in far other scenes! For I was reared
In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,
And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.
But thou, my babe! shalt wander like a breeze
By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags
Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,
Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores
And mountain crags: so shalt thou see and hear
The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible
Of that eternal language, which thy God
Utters, who from eternity doth teach
Himself in all, and all things in himself.
Great universal Teacher! he shall mould
Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,
Whether the summer clothe the general earth
With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing
Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch
Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch
Smokes in the sun-thaw; whether the eve-drops fall
Heard only in the trances of the blast,
Or if the secret ministry of frost
Shall hang them up in silent icicles,
Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

1798.

THE NIGHTINGALE;

A CONVERSATION POEM. APRIL, 1798.

No cloud, no relique of the sunken day
Distinguishes the West, no long thin slip
Of sullen light, no obscure trembling hues.
Come, we will rest on this old mossy bridge!
You see the glimmer of the stream beneath,
But hear no murmuring: it flows silently,
O'er its soft bed of verdure. All is still,
A balmy night! and though the stars be dim,
Yet let us think upon the vernal showers
That gladden the green earth, and we shall find
A pleasure in the dimness of the stars.
And hark! the Nightingale begins its song,
"Most musical, most melancholy" bird!*
A melancholy bird! Oh! idle thought!
In nature there is nothing melancholy.
But some night-wandering man whose heart was pierced
With the remembrance of a grievous wrong,
Or slow distemper, or neglected love,
(And so, poor wretch! filled all things with himself,
And made all gentle sounds tell back the tale
Of his own sorrow) he, and such as he,
First named these notes a melancholy strain.
And many a poet echoes the conceit;

* "*Most musical, most melancholy.*"] This passage in Milton possesses an excellence far superior to that of mere description. It is spoken in the character of the melancholy man, and has therefore a dramatic propriety. The author makes this remark, to rescue himself from the charge of having alluded with levity, to a line in Milton.

Poet who hath been building up the rhyme
When he had better far have stretched his limbs
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,
By sun or moon-light, to the influxes
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements
Surrendering his whole spirit, of his song
And of his fame forgetful! so his fame
Should share in Nature's immortality,
A venerable thing! and so his song
Should make all Nature lovelier, and itself
Be loved like Nature! But 'twill not be so;
And youths and maidens most poetical,
Who lose the deepening twilights of the spring
In ball-rooms and hot theatres, they still
Full of meek sympathy must heave their sighs
O'er Philomela's pity-pleading strains.

My Friend, and thou, our Sister! we have learnt
A different lore: we may not thus profane
Nature's sweet voices, always full of love
And joyance! 'Tis the merry Nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music!

And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,

Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many nightingales; and far and near,
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such a harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day! On moon-lit bushes,
Whose dewy leaflets are but half disclosed,
You may perchance behold them on the twigs,
Their bright, bright eyes, their eyes both bright and full,
Glistening, while many a glow-worm in the shade
Lights up her love-torch.

A most gentle Maid,
Who dwelleth in her hospitable home
Hard by the castle, and at latest eve
(Even like a Lady vowed and dedicate
To something more than Nature in the grove)
Glides through the pathways; she knows all their notes,
That gentle Maid! and oft a moment's space,
What time the moon was lost behind a cloud,
Hath heard a pause of silence; till the moon
Emerging, hath awakened earth and sky
With one sensation, and these wakeful birds
Have all burst forth in choral minstrelsy,
As if some sudden gale had swept at once
A hundred airy harps! And she hath watched
Many a nightingale perched giddily

On blossomy twig still swinging from the breeze,
And to that motion tune his wanton song
Like tipsy joy that reels with tossing head.

Farewell, O Warbler! till to-morrow eve,
And you my friends! farewell, a short farewell!
We have been loitering long and pleasantly,
And now for our dear homes.—That strain again!
Full fain it would delay me! My dear babe,
Who, capable of no articulate sound,
Mars all things with his imitative lisp,
How he would place his hand beside his ear,
His little hand, the small forefinger up,
And bid us listen! And I deem it wise
To make him Nature's playmate. He knows well
The evening-star; and once, when he awoke
In most distressful mood (some inward pain
Had made up that strange thing, an infant's dream)
I hurried with him to our orchard-plot,
And he beheld the moon, and, hushed at once,
Suspends his sobs, and laughs most silently,
While his fair eyes, that swam with undropped tears,
Did glitter in the yellow moon-beam! Well!—
It is a father's tale: But if that Heaven
Should give me life, his childhood shall grow up
Familiar with these songs, that with the night
He may associate joy.—Once more, farewell,
Sweet Nightingale! Once more, my friends! farewell.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE ALBUM AT ELBINGERODE, IN THE HARTZ FOREST.

I stood on Brocken's * sovran height, and saw
Woods crowding upon woods, hills over hills,
A surging scene, and only limited
By the blue distance. Heavily my way
Downward I dragged through fir groves evermore,
Where bright green moss heaves in sepulchral forms
Speckled with sunshine; and, but seldom heard,
The sweet bird's song became a hollow sound;
And the breeze, murmuring indivisibly,
Preserved its solemn murmur most distinct
From many a note of many a waterfall,
And the brook's chatter; 'mid whose islet stones
The dingy kidling with its tinkling bell
Leaped frolicsome, or old romantic goat
Sat, his white beard slow waving. I moved on
In low and languid mood: † for I had found
That outward forms, the loftiest, still receive
Their finer influence from the Life within;—
Fair cyphers else: fair, but of import vague
Or unconcerning, where the heart not finds
History or prophecy of friend, or child,
Or gentle maid, our first and early love,

* The highest mountain in the Hartz, and indeed in North Germany.

† ——————— When I have gazed
From some high eminence on goodly vales,
And cots and villages embowered below,
The thought would rise that all to me was strange
Amid the scenes so fair, nor one small spot
Where my tired mind might rest, and call it home.
Southey's Hymn to the Penates.

Or father, or the venerable name
Of our adored country! O thou Queen,
Thou delegated Deity of Earth,
O dear, dear England! how my longing eye
Turned westward, shaping in the steady clouds
Thy sands and high white cliffs!

My native land!
Filled with the thought of thee this heart was proud,
Yea, mine eye swam with tears: that all the view
From sovran Brocken, woods and woody hills,
Floated away, like a departing dream,
Feeble and dim! Stranger, these impulses
Blame thou not lightly; nor will I profane,
With hasty judgment or injurious doubt,
That man's sublimer spirit, who can feel
That God is everywhere! the God who framed
Mankind to be one mighty family,
Himself our Father, and the World our Home.

1798-9.

HYMN

BEFORE SUN-RISE, IN THE VALE OF CHAMOUNI.

Besides the Rivers, Arve and Arveiron, which have their sources in the foot of Mont Blanc, five conspicuous torrents rush down its sides; and within a few paces of the Glaciers, the Gentiana Major grows in immense numbers with its "flowers of loveliest blue."

Hast thou a charm to stay the morning-star
In his steep course? So long he seems to pause
On thy bald awful head, O sovran Blanc!
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly; but thou, most awful Form!
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,

How silently! Around thee and above
Deep is the air and dark, substantial, black,
An ebon mass: methinks thou piercest it,
As with a wedge! but when I look again,
It is thine own calm home, thy crystal shrine,
Thy habitation from eternity!
O dread and silent mount! I gazed upon thee,
Till thou, still present to the bodily sense,
Didst vanish from my thought: entranced in prayer
I worshipped the Invisible alone.

Yet, like some sweet beguiling melody,
So sweet, we know not we are listening to it,
Thou, the meanwhile, wast blending with my thought,
Yea, with my life and life's own secret joy:
Till the dilating Soul, enrapt, transfused,
Into the mighty vision passing—there
As in her natural form, swelled vast to Heaven!

Awake, my soul! not only passive praise
Thou owest! not alone these swelling tears,
Mute thanks and secret ecstasy! Awake,
Voice of sweet song! Awake, my Heart, awake!
Green vales and icy cliffs, all join my Hymn.

Thou first and chief, sole sovran of the Vale!
O struggling with the darkness all the night,
And visited all night by troops of stars,
Or when they climb the sky or when they sink:
Companion of the morning-star at dawn,
Thyself Earth's rosy star, and of the dawn
Co-herald: wake, O wake, and utter praise!
Who sank thy sunless pillars deep in Earth?

Who filled thy countenance with rosy light?
Who made thee parent of perpetual streams?

And you, ye five wild torrents fiercely glad!
Who called you forth from night and utter death,
From dark and icy caverns called you forth,
Down those precipitous, black, jagged Rocks,
For ever shattered and the same for ever?
Who gave you your invulnerable life,
Your strength, your speed, your fury, and your joy,
Unceasing thunder and eternal foam?
And who commanded (and the silence came,)
Here let the billows stiffen, and have rest?

Ye ice-falls! ye that from the mountain's brow
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty voice,
And stopped at once amid their maddest plunge!
Motionless torrents! silent cataracts!
Who made you glorious as the gates of Heaven
Beneath the keen full moon? Who bade the sun
Clothe you with rainbows? Who, with living flowers
Of loveliest blue, spread garlands at your feet?—
God! let the torrents, like a shout of nations,
Answer! and let the ice-plains echo, God!
God! sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice!
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds!
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder, God!

Ye living flowers that skirt the eternal frost!
Ye wild goats sporting round the eagle's nest!
Ye eagles, play-mates of the mountain-storm!
Ye lightnings, the dread arrows of the clouds!

Ye signs and wonders of the element!
Utter forth God, and fill the hills with praise!

Thou too, hoar Mount! with thy sky-pointing peaks,
Oft from whose feet the avalanche, unheard,
Shoots downward, glittering through the pure serene
Into the depth of clouds, that veil thy breast—
Thou too again, stupendous Mountain! thou
That as I raise my head, awhile bowed low
In adoration, upward from thy base
Slow travelling with dim eyes suffused with tears,
Solemnly seemest, like a vapoury cloud,
To rise before me—Rise, O ever rise,
Rise like a cloud of incense, from the Earth!
Thou kingly Spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from Earth to Heaven,
Great hierarch! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

COMPOSED ON THE NIGHT AFTER HIS RECITATION OF A POEM ON THE GROWTH OF AN INDIVIDUAL MIND.

Friend of the wise! and teacher of the good!
Into my heart have I received that lay
More than historic, that prophetic lay
Wherein (high theme by thee first sung aright)
Of the foundations and the building up
Of a Human Spirit thou hast dared to tell
What may be told, to the understanding mind

Revealable; and what within the mind
By vital breathings secret as the soul
Of vernal growth, oft quickens in the heart
Thoughts all too deep for words!—

Theme hard as high
Of smiles spontaneous, and mysterious fears,
(The first-born they of Reason and twin-birth)
Of tides obedient to external force,
And currents self-determined, as might seem,
Or by some inner power; of moments awful,
Now in thy inner life, and now abroad,
When power streamed from thee, and thy soul received
The light reflected, as a light bestowed—
Of fancies fair, and milder hours of youth,
Hyblean murmurs of poetic thought
Industrious in its joy, in vales and glens
Native or outland, lakes and famous hills!
Or on the lonely high-road, when the stars
Were rising; or by secret mountain-streams,
The guides and the companions of thy way!

Of more than Fancy, of the Social Sense
Distending wide, and man beloved as man,
Where France in all her towns lay vibrating
Like some becalmed bark beneath the burst
Of Heaven's immediate thunder, when no cloud
Is visible, or shadow on the main.
For thou wert there, thine own brows garlanded,
Amid the tremor of a realm aglow,
Amid a mighty nation jubilant,
When from the general heart of human kind
Hope sprang forth like a full-born Deity!

—— Of that dear Hope afflicted and struck down,
So summoned homeward, thenceforth calm and sure
From the dread watch-tower of man's absolute self,
With light unwaning on her eyes, to look
Far on—herself a glory to behold,
The Angel of the vision! Then (last strain)
Of Duty, chosen laws controlling choice,
Action and joy!—An Orphic song indeed,
A song divine of high and passionate thoughts
To their own music chanted!

O great Bard!
Ere yet that last strain dying awed the air,
With steadfast eye I viewed thee in the choir
Of ever-enduring men. The truly great
Have all one age, and from one visible space
Shed influence! They, both in power and act,
Are permanent, and Time is not with them,
Save as it worketh for them, they in it.
Nor less a sacred roll, than those of old,
And to be placed, as they, with gradual fame
Among the archives of mankind, thy work
Makes audible a linked lay of Truth,
Of Truth profound a sweet continuous lay,
Not learnt, but native, her own natural notes!
Ah! as I listened with a heart forlorn,
The pulses of my being beat anew:
And even as life returns upon the drowned,
Life's joy rekindling roused a throng of pains—
Keen pangs of Love, awakening as a babe
Turbulent, with an outcry in the heart;
And fears self-willed, that shunned the eye of hope;
And hope that scarce would know itself from fear;

Sense of past youth, and manhood come in vain,
And genius given, and knowledge won in vain;
And all which I had culled in wood-walks wild,
And all which patient toil had reared, and all,
Commune with thee had opened out—but flowers
Strewed on my corse, and borne upon my bier,
In the same coffin, for the self-same grave!

That way no more! and ill beseems it me,
Who came a welcomer in herald's guise,
Singing of glory, and futurity,
To wander back on such unhealthful road,
Plucking the poisons of self-harm! And ill
Such intertwine beseems triumphal wreaths
Strewed before thy advancing!

Nor do thou,
Sage Bard! impair the memory of that hour
Of thy communion with my nobler mind
By pity or grief, already felt too long!
Nor let my words import more blame than needs.
The tumult rose and ceased: for peace is nigh
Where wisdom's voice has found a listening heart.
Amid the howl of more than wintry storms,
The halcyon hears the voice of vernal hours
Already on the wing.
Eve following eve,
Dear tranquil time, when the sweet sense of Home
Is sweetest! moments for their own sake hailed
And more desired, more precious for thy song,
In silence listening, like a devout child,
My soul lay passive, by the various strain
Driven as in surges now beneath the stars,

With momentary stars of my own birth,
Fair constellated foam,* still darting off
Into the darkness; now a tranquil sea,
Outspread and bright, yet swelling to the moon.

And when—O Friend! my comforter and guide!
Strong in thyself, and powerful to give strength!—
Thy long sustained Song finally closed,
And thy deep voice had ceased—yet thou thyself
Wert still before my eyes, and round us both
That happy vision of beloved faces—
Scarce conscious, and yet conscious of its close
I sate, my being blended in one thought
(Thought was it? or aspiration? or resolve?)
Absorbed, yet hanging still upon the sound—
And when I rose, I found myself in prayer.

INSCRIPTION

FOR A FOUNTAIN ON A HEATH.

This Sycamore, oft musical with bees—
Such tents the Patriarchs loved! O long unharmed
May all its aged boughs o'er-canopy
The small round basin, which this jutting stone
Keeps pure from falling leaves! Long may the Spring,

* "A beautiful white cloud of foam at momentary intervals coursed by the side of the vessel with a roar, and little stars of flame danced and sparkled and went out in it: and every now and then light detachments of this white cloud-like foam darted off from the vessel's side, each with its own small constellation, over the sea, and scoured out of sight like a Tartar troop over a wilderness."—*The Friend*, p. 220.

Quietly as a sleeping infant's breath,
Send up cold waters to the traveller
With soft and even pulse! Nor ever cease
Yon tiny cone of sand its soundless dance,
Which at the bottom, like a Fairy's page,
As merry and no taller, dances still,
Nor wrinkles the smooth surface of the Fount.
Here twilight is and coolness: here is moss,
A soft seat, and a deep and ample shade.
Thou may'st toil far and find no second tree.
Drink, Pilgrim, here; Here rest! and if thy heart
Be innocent, here too shalt thou refresh
Thy Spirit, listening to some gentle sound,
Or passing gale or hum of murmuring bees!

A TOMBLESS EPITAPH.

'Tis true, Idoloclastes Satyrane!
(So call him, for so mingling blame with praise,
And smiles with anxious looks, his earliest friends,
Masking his birth-name, wont to character
His wild-wood fancy and impetuous zeal,)
'Tis true that, passionate for ancient truths,
And honouring with religious love the great
Of elder times, he hated to excess,
With an unquiet and intolerant scorn,
The hollow puppets of a hollow age,
Ever idolatrous, and changing ever
Its worthless idols! learning, power, and time,
(Too much of all) thus wasting in vain war
Of fervid colloquy. Sickness, 'tis true,

Whole years of weary days, besieged him close,
Even to the gates and inlets of his life!
But it is true, no less, that strenuous, firm,
And with a natural gladness, he maintained
The citadel unconquered, and in joy
Was strong to follow the delightful Muse,
For not a hidden path, that to the shades
Of the beloved Parnassian forest leads,
Lurked undiscovered by him; not a rill
There issues from the fount of Hippocrene,
But he had traced it upward to its source,
Through open glade, dark glen, and secret dell,
Knew the gay wild flowers on its banks, and culled
Its med'cinable herbs. Yea, oft alone,
Piercing the long-neglected holy cave,
The haunt obscure of old Philosophy,
He bade with lifted torch its starry walls
Sparkle, as erst they sparkled to the flame
Of odorous lamps tended by Saint and Sage.
O framed for calmer times and nobler hearts!
O studious Poet, eloquent for truth!
Philosopher! contemning wealth and death,
Yet docile, childlike, full of Life and Love!
Here, rather than on monumental stone,
This record of thy worth thy Friend inscribes,
Thoughtful, with quiet tears upon his cheek.

1809.

IV. POEMS OF VARIED CHARACTER.

TO A YOUNG FRIEND,

ON HIS PROPOSING TO DOMESTICATE WITH THE AUTHOR.
COMPOSED IN 1796.

A MOUNT, not wearisome and bare and steep,
But a green mountain variously up-piled,
Where o'er the jutting rocks soft mosses creep,
Or coloured lichens with slow oozing weep;
Where cypress and the darker yew start wild;
And 'mid the summer torrent's gentle dash
Dance brightened the red clusters of the ash;
Beneath whose boughs, by those still sounds beguiled,
Calm Pensiveness might muse herself to sleep;
Till haply startled by some fleecy dam,
That rustling on the bushy cliff above,
With melancholy bleat of anxious love,
Made meek enquiry for her wandering lamb:
Such a green mountain 'twere most sweet to climb,
E'ven while the bosom ached with loneliness—
How more than sweet, if some dear friend should bless
The adventurous toil, and up the path sublime
Now lead, now follow: the glad landscape round
Wide and more wide, increasing without bound!

O then 'twere loveliest sympathy, to mark
The berries of the half-uprooted ash
Dripping and bright; and list the torrent's dash —
Beneath the cypress, or the yew more dark,

Seated at ease, on some smooth mossy rock;
In social silence now, and now to unlock
The treasured heart; arm linked in friendly arm,
Save if the one, his muse's witching charm
Muttering brow-bent, at unwatched distance lag;
Till high o'er head his beckoning friend appears
And from the forehead of the topmost crag
Shouts eagerly; for haply there uprears
That shadowing pine its old romantic limbs,
Which latest shall detain the enamoured sight
Seen from below, when eve the valley dims,
Tinged yellow with the rich departing light;
And haply, basoned in some unsunned cleft,
A beauteous spring, the rock's collected tears,
Sleeps sheltered there, scarce wrinkled by the gale!
Together thus, the world's vain turmoil left,
Stretched on the crag, and shadowed by the pine,
And bending o'er the clear delicious fount,
Ah! dearest youth! it were a lot divine
To cheat our noons in moralizing mood,
While west-winds fanned our temples toil-bedewed:
Then downwards slope, oft pausing, from the mount,
To some lone mansion, in some woody dale,
Where smiling with blue eye, domestic bliss
Gives this the husband's, that the brother's kiss!
Thus rudely versed in allegoric lore,
The Hill of Knowledge I essayed to trace;
That verdurous hill with many a resting-place
And many a stream, whose warbling waters pour
To glad and fertilize the subject plains;
That hill with secret springs, and nooks untrod,
And many a fancy-blest and holy sod
Where Inspiration, his diviner strains

Low murmuring, lay; and starting from the rocks
Stiff evergreens, whose spreading foliage mocks
Want's barren soil, and the bleak frosts of age,
And bigotry's mad fire-invoking rage!
O meek retiring spirit! we will climb,
Cheering and cheered, this lovely hill sublime;
And from the stirring world up-lifted high,
(Whose noises, faintly wafted on the wind,
To quiet musings shall attune the mind,
And oft the melancholy theme supply)
There, while the prospect through the gazing eye
Pours all its healthful greenness on the soul,
We'll smile at wealth, and learn to smile at fame,
Our hopes, our knowledge, and our joys the same,
As neighbouring fountains image, each the whole;
Then when the mind hath drunk its fill of truth
We'll discipline the heart to pure delight,
Rekindling sober joy's domestic flame.
They whom I love shall love thee, honoured youth!
Now may Heaven realize this vision bright!

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG MAN OF FORTUNE

WHO ABANDONED HIMSELF TO AN INDOLENT AND CAUSELESS MELANCHOLY.

Hence that fantastic wantonness of woe,
O Youth to partial Fortune vainly dear!
To plundered want's half-sheltered hovel go,
Go, and some hunger-bitten infant hear
Moan haply in a dying mother's ear:

Or when the cold and dismal fog-damps brood
O'er the rank church-yard with sear elm-leaves strewed,
Pace round some widow's grave, whose dearer part
Was slaughtered, where o'er his uncoffined limbs
The flocking flesh-birds screamed! Then, while thy heart
Groans, and thine eye a fiercer sorrow dims,
Know (and the truth shall kindle thy young mind)
What nature makes thee mourn, she bids thee heal!
O abject! if, to sickly dreams resigned,
All effortless thou leave life's common-weal
A prey to tyrants, murderers of mankind.

SONNET TO THE RIVER OTTER.

Dear native brook! wild streamlet of the West!
How many various-fated years have past,
What happy, and what mournful hours, since last
I skimmed the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
Numbering its light leaps! yet so deep imprest
Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine eyes
I never shut amid the sunny ray,
But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,
Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows grey,
And bedded sand that, veined with various dyes,
Gleamed through thy bright transparence! On my way,
Visions of childhood! oft have ye beguiled
Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs.
Ah! that once more I were a careless child!

THE FOSTER MOTHER'S TALE.

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

The following Scene, as unfit for the stage, was taken from the tragedy in the year 1797, and published in the Lyrical Ballads.

Enter TERESA *and* SELMA.

Ter. 'Tis said, he spake of you familiarly,
As mine and Alvar's common foster-mother.
Sel. Now blessings on the man, whoe'er he be,
That joined your names with mine! O my sweet Lady,
As often as I think of those dear times,
When you two little ones would stand, at eve,
On each side of my chair, and make me learn
All you had learnt in the day; and how to talk
In gentle phrase; then bid me sing to you——
'Tis more like heaven to come, than what has been!
Ter. But that entrance, Selma?
Sel. Can no one hear? It is a perilous tale!
Ter. No one.
Sel. My husband's father told it me,
Poor old Sesina—angels rest his soul;
He was a woodman, and could fell and saw
With lusty arm. You know that huge round beam
Which props the hanging wall of the old chapel?
Beneath that tree, while yet it was a tree,
He found a baby wrapt in mosses, lined
With thistle-beards, and such small locks of wool
As hang on brambles. Well, he brought him home,
And reared him at the then Lord Valdez' cost,
And so the babe grew up a pretty boy,

A pretty boy, but most unteachable—
And never learn'd a prayer, nor told a bead,
But knew the names of birds, and mocked their notes,
And whistled, as he were a bird himself.
And all the autumn 'twas his only play
To gather seeds of wild flowers, and to plant them
With earth and water on the stumps of trees.
A Friar, who gathered simples in the wood,
A grey-haired man, he loved this little boy:
The boy loved him, and, when the friar taught him,
He soon could write with the pen; and from that time
Lived chiefly at the convent or the castle.
So he became a rare and learned youth:
But O! poor wretch! he read, and read, and read,
Till his brain turned; and ere his twentieth year
He had unlawful thoughts of many things:
And though he prayed, he never loved to pray
With holy men, nor in a holy place.
But yet his speech, it was so soft and sweet,
The late Lord Valdez ne'er was wearied with him.
And once, as by the north side of the chapel
They stood together chained in deep discourse,
The earth heaved under them with such a groan,
That the wall tottered, and had well nigh fallen
Right on their heads. My Lord was sorely frightened;
A fever seized him, and he made confession
Of all the heretical and lawless talk
Which brought this judgment: so the youth was seized,
And cast into that hole. My husband's father
Sobbed like a child—it almost broke his heart:
And once as he was working near this dungeon,
He heard a voice distinctly; 'twas the youth's,
Who sung a doleful song about green fields,

How sweet it were on lake or wide savanna
To hunt for food, and be a naked man,
And wander up and down at liberty.
He always doted on the youth, and now
His love grew desperate; and defying death,
He made that cunning entrance I described,
And the young man escaped.
Ter. 'Tis a sweet tale:
Such as would lull a listening child to sleep,
His rosy face besoiled with unwiped tears.
And what became of him?
Sel. He went on shipboard
With those bold voyagers who made discovery
Of golden lands. Sesina's younger brother
Went likewise, and when he returned to Spain,
He told Sesina, that the poor mad youth,
Soon after they arrived in that new world,
In spite of his dissuasion, seized a boat,
And all alone set sail by silent moonlight
Up a great river, great as any sea,
And ne'er was heard of more: but 'tis supposed,
He lived and died among the savage men.

SONNET.

COMPOSED ON A JOURNEY HOMEWARD; THE AUTHOR HAVING RECEIVED INTELLIGENCE OF THE BIRTH OF A SON, *Sept.* 20, 1796.

Oft o'er my brain does that strange fancy roll
Which makes the present (while the flash doth last)
Seem a mere semblance of some unknown past
Mixed with such feelings as perplex the soul
Self-questioned in her sleep: and some have said

We lived, ere yet this robe of flesh we wore.*
O my sweet baby! when I reach my door,
If heavy looks should tell me thou art dead,
(As sometimes, through excess of hope, I fear)
I think that I should struggle to believe
Thou wert a spirit, to this nether sphere
Sentenced for some more venial crime to grieve;
Did'st scream, then spring to meet Heaven's quick reprieve,
While we wept idly o'er thy little bier!

SONNET.

TO A FRIEND WHO ASKED, HOW I FELT WHEN THE NURSE FIRST PRESENTED MY INFANT TO ME.

Charles! my slow heart was only sad, when first
I scanned that face of feeble infancy:
For dimly on my thoughtful spirit burst
All I had been, and all my child might be!
But when I saw it on its mother's arm,
And hanging at her bosom (she the while
Bent o'er its features with a tearful smile)
Then I was thrilled and melted, and most warm
Impressed a father's kiss: and all beguiled
Of dark remembrance and presageful fear,
I seemed to see an angel-form appear—
'Twas even thine, beloved woman mild!
So for the mother's sake the child was dear,
And dearer was the mother for the child.

* Ἦν που ἡμῶν ἡ ψύχη πρὶν ἐν τῷδε τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ εἴδει γενέσθαι.—*Plat. in Phædon.*

TELL'S BIRTH-PLACE.

IMITATED FROM STOLBERG.

I.

Mark this holy chapel well!
The birth-place, this, of William Tell,
Here, where stands God's altar dread,
Stood his parents' marriage-bed.

II.

Here, first, an infant to her breast,
Him his loving mother prest;
And kissed the babe, and blessed the day,
And prayed as mothers used to pray.

III.

"Vouchsafe him health, O God! and give
The child thy servant still to live!"
But God had destined to do more
Through him, than through an armed power.

IV.

God gave him reverence of laws,
Yet stirring blood in Freedom's cause—
A spirit to his rocks akin,
The eye of the hawk, and the fire therein!

V.

To Nature and to Holy Writ
Alone did God the boy commit:
Where flashed and roared the torrent, oft
His soul found wings, and soared aloft!

VI.

The straining oar and chamois chase
Had formed his limbs to strength and grace:
On wave and wind the boy would toss,
Was great, nor knew how great he was!

VII.

He knew not that his chosen hand,
Made strong by God, his native land
Would rescue from the shameful yoke
Of Slavery—the which he broke!

ODE TO GEORGIANA,

DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE, ON THE TWENTY-FOURTH STANZA IN HER "PASSAGE OVER MOUNT GOTHARD."

> "And hail the chapel! hail the platform wild
> Where Tell directed the avenging dart,
> With well strung arm, that first preserved his child,
> Then aimed the arrow at the tyrant's heart."

Splendour's fondly fostered child!
And did you hail the platform wild,
Where one the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learn'd you that heroic measure?

Light as a dream your days their circlets ran,
From all that teaches brotherhood to Man
Far, far removed! from want, from hope, from fear!
Enchanting music lulled your infant ear,

Obeisance, praises soothed your infant heart:
Emblazonments and old ancestral crests,
With many a bright obtrusive form of art,
Detained your eye from nature: stately vests,
That veiling strove to deck your charms divine,
Rich viands and the pleasurable wine,
Were yours unearned by toil; nor could you see
The unenjoying toiler's misery.
And yet, free Nature's uncorrupted child,
You hailed the chapel and the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learn'd you that heroic measure?

There crowd your finely-fibred frame,
All living faculties of bliss;
And Genius to your cradle came,
His forehead wreathed with lambent flame,
And bending low, with godlike kiss
Breath'd in a more celestial life;
But boasts not many a fair compeer,
A heart as sensitive to joy and fear?
And some, perchance, might wage an equal strife,
Some few, to nobler being wrought,
Corrivals in the nobler gift of thought.
Yet these delight to celebrate
Laurelled war and plumy state;
Or in verse and music dress
Tales of rustic happiness—
Pernicious tales! insidious strains!
That steel the rich man's breast,
And mock the lot unblest,

The sordid vices and the abject pains,
Which evermore must be
The doom of ignorance and penury!
But you, free Nature's uncorrupted child,
You hailed the chapel and the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learn'd you that heroic measure?

You were a mother! That most holy name,
Which Heaven and Nature bless,
I may not vilely prostitute to those
Whose infants owe them less
Than the poor catterpillar owes
Its gaudy parent fly.
You were a mother! at your bosom fed
The babes that loved you. You, with laughing eye,
Each twilight-thought, each nascent feeling read,
Which you yourself created. Oh! delight!
A second time to be a mother,
Without the mother's bitter groans:
Another thought, and yet another,
By touch, or taste, by looks or tones
O'er the growing sense to roll,
The mother of your infant's soul!
The Angel of the Earth, who, while he guides
His chariot-planet round the goal of day,
All trembling gazes on the eye of God,
A moment turned his awful face away;
And as he viewed you, from his aspect sweet
New influences in your being rose,
Blest intuitions and communions fleet
With living Nature, in her joys and woes!

Thenceforth your soul rejoiced to see
The shrine of social Liberty!
O beautiful! O Nature's child!
'Twas thence you hailed the platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O Lady, nursed in pomp and pleasure!
Thence learn'd you that heroic measure.

ON AN INFANT

WHICH DIED BEFORE BAPTISM.

"Be, rather than be called, a child of God,"
Death whispered!—with assenting nod,
Its head upon its mother's breast,
The Baby bowed, without demur—
Of the kingdom of the Blest
Possessor, not inheritor.

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

Its balmy lips the infant blest
Relaxing from its mother's breast,
How sweet it heaves the happy sigh
Of innocent satiety!

And such my infant's latest sigh!
O tell, rude stone! the passer by,
That here the pretty babe doth lie,
Death sang to sleep with Lullaby.

HYMN TO THE EARTH.

HEXAMETERS.

EARTH! thou mother of numberless children, the nurse and the mother,
Hail! O Goddess, thrice hail! Blest be thou! and, blessing, I hymn thee!
Forth, ye sweet sounds! from my harp, and my voice shall float on your surges—
Soar thou aloft, O my soul! and bear up my song on thy pinions.

Travelling the vale with mine eyes—green meadows and lake with green island,
Dark in its basin of rock, and the bare stream flowing in brightness,
Thrilled with thy beauty and love in the wooded slope of the mountain,
Here, great mother, I lie, thy child, with his head on thy bosom!
Playful the spirits of noon, that rushing soft through thy tresses,
Green-haired goddess! refresh me; and hark! as they hurry or linger,
Fill the pause of my harp, or sustain it with musical murmurs.
Into my being thou murmurest joy, and tenderest sadness
Shedd'st thou, like dew, on my heart, till the joy and the heavenly sadness
Pour themselves forth from my heart in tears, and the hymn of thanksgiving.

Earth! thou mother of numberless children, the nurse and the mother,
Sister thou of the stars, and beloved by the sun, the rejoicer!
Guardian and friend of the moon, O Earth, whom the comets forget not,
Yea, in the measureless distance wheel round and again they behold thee!
Fadeless and young (and what if the latest birth of creation?)
Bride and consort of Heaven, that looks down upon thee enamoured!
Say, mysterious Earth! O say, great mother and goddess,
Was it not well with thee then, when first thy lap was ungirdled,
Thy lap to the genial Heaven, the day that he wooed thee and won thee!
Fair was thy blush, the fairest and first of the blushes of morning!
Deep was the shudder, O Earth! the throe of thy self-retention:
Inly thou strovest to flee, and didst seek thyself at thy centre!
Mightier far was the joy of thy sudden resilience; and forthwith
Myriad myriads of lives teemed forth from the mighty embracement.
Thousand-fold tribes of dwellers, impelled by thousand-fold instincts,
Filled, as a dream, the wide waters; the rivers sang on their channels;
Laughed on their shores the hoarse seas; the yearning ocean swelled upward;

Young life lowed through the meadows, the woods, and the echoing mountains,
Wandered bleating in valleys, and warbled on blossoming branches.

MAHOMET.

Utter the song, O my soul! the flight and return of Mohammed,
Prophet and priest, who scatter'd abroad both evil and blessing,
Huge wasteful empires founded and hallow'd slow persecution,
Soul-withering, but crush'd the blasphemous rites of the Pagan
And idolatrous Christians.—For veiling the Gospel of Jesus,
They, the best corrupting, had made it worse than the vilest.
Wherefore Heaven decreed th' enthusiast warrior of Mecca,
Choosing good from iniquity rather than evil from goodness.
Loud the tumult in Mecca surrounding the fane of the Idol;—
Naked and prostrate the priesthood were laid—the people with mad shouts
Thundering now, and now with saddest ululation
Flew, as over the channel of rock-stone the ruinous river
Shatters its waters abreast, and in mazy uproar bewilder'd
Rushes dividuous all—all rushing impetuous onward.

THE VIRGIN'S CRADLE-HYMN.

COPIED FROM A PRINT OF THE VIRGIN, IN A ROMAN CATHOLIC VILLAGE IN GERMANY.

DORMI, Jesu! Mater ridet
Quæ tam dulcem somnum videt,
Dormi, Jesu! blandule!
Si non dormis, Mater plorat,
Inter fila cantans orat,
Blande, veni, somnule.

ENGLISH.

Sleep, sweet babe! my cares beguiling:
Mother sits beside thee smiling;
Sleep, my darling, tenderly!
If thou sleep not, mother mourneth,
Singing as her wheel she turneth:
Come, soft slumber, balmily!

WRITTEN DURING A TEMPORARY BLINDNESS, IN THE YEAR 1799.

O, WHAT a life is the eye! what a strange and inscrutable essence!
Him, that is utterly blind, nor glimpses the fire that warms him;
Him that never beheld the swelling breast of his mother;
Him that smiled in his gladness as a babe that smiles in its slumber;

Even for him it exists! It moves and stirs in its prison!
Lives with a separate life: and—"Is it a spirit?" he murmurs:
"Sure, it has thoughts of its own, and to see is only a language!"

ODE TO TRANQUILLITY.

Tranquillity! thou better name
Than all the family of Fame!
Thou ne'er wilt leave my riper age
To low intrigue, or factious rage;
For oh! dear child of thoughtful Truth,
To thee I gave my early youth,
And left the bark, and blest the stedfast shore,
Ere yet the tempest rose and scared me with its roar.

Who late and lingering seeks thy shrine,
On him but seldom, Power divine
Thy spirit rests! Satiety
And Sloth, poor counterfeits of thee,
Mock the tired worldling. Idle hope
And dire remembrance interlope,
To vex the feverish slumbers of the mind:
The bubble floats before, the spectre stalks behind.

But me thy gentle hand will lead
At morning through the accustomed mead;
And in the sultry summer's heat
Will build me up a mossy seat;
And when the gust of Autumn crowds,
And breaks the busy moonlight clouds,

Thou best the thought canst raise, the heart attune,
Light as the busy clouds, calm as the gliding moon.

The feeling heart, the searching soul,
To thee I dedicate the whole!
And while within myself I trace
The greatness of some future race,
Aloof with hermit-eye I scan
The present works of present man—
A wild and dream-like trade of blood and guile,
Too foolish for a tear, too wicked for a smile!

CATULLIAN HENDECASYLLABLES.

Hear, my beloved, an old Milesian story!—
High, and embosom'd in congregated laurels,
Glimmer'd a temple upon a breezy headland,
In the dim distance amid the skiey billows
Rose a fair island; the god of flocks had placed it.
From the far shores of the bleak resounding island
Oft by the moonlight a little boat came floating,
Came to the sea-cave beneath the breezy headland,
Where amid myrtles a pathway stole in mazes
Up to the groves of the high embosom'd temple.
There in a thicket of dedicated roses,
Oft did a priestess, as lovely as a vision,
Pouring her soul to the son of Cytherea,
Pray him to hover around the slight canoe-boat,
And with invisible pilotage to guide it
Over the dusk-wave, until the nightly sailor
Shivering with ecstasy sank upon her bosom.

DEJECTION: AN ODE.

Late, late yestreen I saw the new Moon,
With the old Moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my Master dear!
We shall have a deadly storm.
BALLAD OF SIR PATRICK SPENCE.

I.

Well! If the Bard was weather-wise, who made
The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unroused by winds, that ply a busier trade
Than those which mould yon cloud in lazy flakes,
Or the dull sobbing draft, that moans and rakes
Upon the springs of this Eolian lute,
Which better far were mute.
For lo! the New-moon winter-bright!
And overspread with phantom light,
(With swimming phantom light o'erspread
But rimmed and circled by a silver thread)
I see the old Moon in her lap, foretelling
The coming on of rain and squally blast.
And oh! that even now the gust were swelling,
And the slant night-shower driving loud and fast!
Those sounds which oft have raised me, whilst they awed,
And sent my soul abroad,
Might now perhaps their wonted impulse give,
Might startle this dull pain, and make it move and live!

II.

A grief without a pang, void, dark, and drear,
A stifled, drowsy, unimpassioned grief,
Which finds no natural outlet, no relief,
In word, or sigh, or tear—

O Lady! in this wan and heartless mood,
To other thoughts by yonder throstle woo'd,
All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimmed, but always seen:
Yon crescent Moon as fixed as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue;
I see them all so excellently fair,
I see, not feel how beautiful they are!

III.

My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.

IV.

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud

Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

V.

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.
Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy that ne'er was given,
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life, and Life's effluence, cloud at once and shower.
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power,
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud—
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

VI.

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence Fancy made me dreams of happiness:
For Hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.
But now afflictions bow me down to earth:
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,

But oh! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
My shaping spirit of Imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
From my own nature all the natural man—
This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

VII.

Hence, viper thoughts, that coil around my mind,
Reality's dark dream!
I turn from you, and listen to the wind,
Which long has raved unnoticed. What a scream
Of agony by torture lengthened out
That lute sent forth! Thou Wind, that ravest without,
Bare craig, or mountain-tairn,* or blasted tree,
Or pine-grove whither woodman never clomb,
Or lonely house, long held the witches' home,
Methinks were fitter instruments for thee,
Mad Lutanist! who in this month of showers,
Of dark brown gardens, and of peeping flowers,
Mak'st Devils' yule, with worse than wintry song,
The blossoms, buds, and timorous leaves among.
Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic sounds!
Thou mighty Poet, e'en to frenzy bold!
What tell'st thou now about?
'Tis of the rushing of a host in rout,
With groans of trampled men, with smarting wounds—

* Tairn is a small lake, generally if not always applied to the lakes up in the mountains, and which are the feeders of those in the valleys. This address to the Storm-wind will not appear extravagant to those who have heard it at night, and in a mountainous country.

At once they groan with pain, and shudder with the cold
But hush! there is a pause of deepest silence!
And all that noise, as of a rushing crowd,
With groans, and tremulous shudderings—all is over—
It tells another tale, with sounds less deep and loud
A tale of less affright,
And tempered with delight,
As Otway's self had framed the tender lay.
'Tis of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way:
And now moans low in bitter grief and fear,
And now screams loud, and hopes to make her mother hear.

VIII.

'Tis midnight, but small thoughts have I of sleep:
Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep!
Visit her, gentle Sleep! with wings of healing,
And may this storm be but a mountain-birth,
May all the stars hang bright above her dwelling,
Silent as though they watched the sleeping Earth!
With light heart may she rise,
Gay fancy, cheerful eyes,
Joy lift her spirit, joy attune her voice;
To her may all things live, from pole to pole,
Their life the eddying of her living soul!
O simple spirit, guided from above,
Dear Lady! friend devoutest of my choice,
Thus mayest thou ever, evermore rejoice.

THE THREE GRAVES.

A FRAGMENT OF A SEXTON'S TALE.

[The Author has published the following humble fragment, encouraged by the decisive recommendation of more than one of our most celebrated living Poets. The language was intended to be dramatic; that is suited to the narrator; and the metre corresponds to the homeliness of the diction. It is therefore presented as the fragment, not of a Poem, but of a common Ballad-tale. Whether this is sufficient to justify the adoption of such a style, in any metrical composition not professedly ludicrous, the Author is himself in some doubt. At all events, it is not presented as poetry, and it is in no way connected with the Author's judgment concerning poetic diction. Its merits, if any, are exclusively psychological. The story which must be supposed to have been narrated in the first and second parts is as follows.

Edward, a young farmer, meets at the house of Ellen her bosom-friend Mary, and commences an acquaintance, which ends in a mutual attachment. With her consent, and by the advice of their common friend Ellen, he announces his hopes and intentions to Mary's mother, a widow-woman bordering on her fortieth year, and from constant health, the possession of a competent property, and from having had no other children but Mary and another daughter (the father died in their infancy), retaining for the greater part, her personal attractions, and comeliness of appearance; but a woman of low education and violent temper. The answer which she at once returned to Edward's application was remarkable—"Well, Edward! you are a handsome young fellow, and you shall have my daughter." From this time all their wooing passed under the mother's eye; and, in fine, she became herself enamoured of her future son-in-law, and practised every art, both of endearment and of calumny, to transfer his affections from her daughter to herself. (The outlines of the Tale are positive facts, and of no very distant date, though the author has purposely altered the names and the scene of action, as well as invented the characters of the parties

and the detail of the incidents.) Edward, however, though perplexed by her strange detractions from her daughter's good qualities, yet in the innocence of his own heart still mistaking her increasing fondness for motherly affection; she at length, overcome by her miserable passion, after much abuse of Mary's temper and moral tendencies, exclaimed with violent emotion—"O Edward! indeed, indeed, she is not fit for you—she has not a heart to love you as you deserve. It is I that love you! Marry me, Edward! and I will this very day settle all my property on you." The Lover's eyes were now opened; and thus taken by surprise, whether from the effect of the horror which he felt, acting as it were hysterically on his nervous system, or that at the first moment he lost the sense of the guilt of the proposal in the feeling of its strangeness and absurdity, he flung her from him and burst into a fit of laughter. Irritated by this almost to frenzy, the woman fell on her knees, and in a loud voice that approached to a scream, she prayed for a curse both on him and on her own child. Mary happened to be in the room directly above them, heard Edward's laugh, and her mother's blasphemous prayer, and fainted away. He, hearing the fall, ran up stairs, and taking her in his arms, carried her off to Ellen's home; and after some fruitless attempts on her part toward a reconciliation with her mother, she was married to him.—And here the third part of the Tale begins.

I was not led to choose this story from any partiality to tragic, much less to monstrous events (though at the time that I composed the verses, somewhat more than twelve years ago, I was less averse to such subjects than at present), but from finding in it a striking proof of the possible effect on the imagination, from an Idea violently and suddenly impressed on it. I had been reading Bryan Edwards's account of the effect of the Oby witchcraft on the negroes in the West Indies, and Hearne's deeply interesting anecdotes of similar workings on the imagination of the Copper Indians (those of my readers who have it in their power will be well repaid for the trouble of referring to those works for the passages alluded to), and I conceived the design of showing that instances of this kind are not peculiar to savage or barbarous tribes, and of illustrating the mode in which the mind is affected in these cases, and the progress and symptoms of the morbid action on the fancy from the beginning.

The Tale is supposed to be narrated by an old Sexton, in a country church-yard, to a traveller whose curiosity had been awakened by the appearance of three graves, close by each other, to two only of which there were grave-stones. On the first of these was the name, and dates, as usual: on the second, no name, but only a date, and the words, "The Mercy of God is infinite."]

1818.

The grapes upon the Vicar's wall
Were ripe as ripe could be;
And yellow leaves in sun and wind
Were falling from the tree.

On the hedge-elms in the narrow lane
Still swung the spikes of corn;
Dear Lord! it seems but yesterday—
Young Edward's marriage-morn.

Up through that wood behind the church,
There leads from Edward's door
A mossy track, all over boughed,
For half a mile or more.

And from their house-door by that track
The bride and bridegroom went;
Sweet Mary, though she was not gay,
Seemed cheerful and content.

But when they to the church-yard came,
I've heard poor Mary say,
As soon as she stepped into the sun,
Her heart it died away.

And when the Vicar joined their hands,
Her limbs did creep and freeze;
But when they prayed, she thought she saw
Her mother on her knees.

And o'er the church-path they returned—
I saw poor Mary's back,
Just as she stepped beneath the boughs
Into the mossy track.

Her feet upon the mossy track
The married maiden set:
That moment—I have heard her say—
She wished she could forget.

The shade o'er-flushed her limbs with heat—
Then came a chill like death:
And when the merry bells rang out,
They seemed to stop her breath.

Beneath the foulest mother's curse
No child could ever thrive:
A mother is a mother still,
The holiest thing alive.

So five months passed: the mother still
Would never heal the strife;
But Edward was a loving man,
And Mary a fond wife.

"My sister may not visit us,
My mother says her nay:
O Edward! you are all to me,
I wish for your sake I could be
More lifesome and more gay.

"I'm dull and sad! indeed, indeed
I know I have no reason!
Perhaps I am not well in health,
And 'tis a gloomy season."

'Twas a drizzly time—no ice, no snow!
And on the few fine days
She stirred not out, lest she might meet
Her mother in the ways.

But Ellen, spite of miry ways
And weather dark and dreary,
Trudged every day to Edward's house,
And made them all more cheery.

Oh! Ellen was a faithful friend,
More dear than any sister!
As cheerful too as singing lark;
And she ne'er left them till 'twas dark,
And then they always missed her.

And now Ash-Wednesday came—that day
But few to church repair:
For on that day you know we read
The Commination prayer.

Our late old Vicar, a kind man,
Once, Sir, he said to me,
He wished that service was clean out
Of our good liturgy.

The mother walked into the church—
To Ellen's seat she went:
Though Ellen always kept her church
All church-days during Lent.

And gentle Ellen welcomed her
With courteous looks and mild:
Thought she "what if her heart should melt,
And all be reconciled!"

The day was scarcely like a day—
The clouds were black outright:
And many a night, with half a moon,
I've seen the church more light.

The wind was wild; against the glass
The rain did beat and bicker;
The church-tower swinging over head,
You scarce could hear the Vicar!

And then and there the mother knelt,
And audibly she cried—
"Oh! may a clinging curse consume
This woman by my side!

O hear me, hear me, Lord in Heaven,
Although you take my life—
O curse this woman, at whose house
Young Edward woo'd his wife.

By night and day, in bed and bower,
O let her cursed be!"
So having prayed, steady and slow,
She rose up from her knee,
And left the church, nor e'er again
The church-door entered she.

I saw poor Ellen kneeling still,
So pale, I guessed not why:
When she stood up, there plainly was
A trouble in her eye.

And when the prayers were done, we all
Came round and asked her why:
Giddy she seemed, and sure there was
A trouble in her eye.

But ere she from the church-door stepped
She smiled and told us why:
"It was a wicked woman's curse,"
Quoth she, "and what care I?"

She smiled, and smiled, and passed it off
Ere from the door she stept—
But all agree it would have been
Much better had she wept.

And if her heart were not at ease,
This was her constant cry—
"It was a wicked woman's curse—
God's good, and what care I?"

There was a hurry in her looks,
Her struggles she redoubled:
"It was a wicked woman's curse,
And why should I be troubled?"

These tears will come—I dandled her
When 'twas the merest fairy—
Good creature! and she hid it all:
She told it not to Mary.

But Mary heard the tale: her arms
Round Ellen's neck she threw;
"O Ellen, Ellen, she cursed me,
And now she hath cursed you!"

I saw young Edward by himself
Stalk fast adown the lee,
He snatched a stick from every fence,
A twig from every tree.

He snapped them still with hand or knee,
And then away they flew!
As if with his uneasy limbs
He knew not what to do!

You see, good sir! that single hill?
His farm lies underneath:
He heard it there, he heard it all,
And only gnashed his teeth.

Now Ellen was a darling love
In all his joys and cares:
And Ellen's name and Mary's name
Fast-linked they both together came,
Whene'er he said his prayers.

And in the moment of his prayers,
He loved them both alike:
Ye, both sweet names with one sweet joy
Upon his heart did strike!

He reach'd his home, and by his looks
They saw his inward strife:
And they clung round him with their arms,
Both Ellen and his wife.

And Mary could not check her tears,
So on his breast she bowed;
Then frenzy melted into grief,
And Edward wept aloud.

Dear Ellen did not weep at all,
But closelier did she cling,
And turned her face, and looked as if
She saw some frightful thing.

THE THREE GRAVES.

PART IV.

To see a man tread over graves
I hold it no good mark;
'Tis wicked in the sun and moon,
And bad luck in the dark!

You see that grave? The Lord he gives,
The Lord he takes away:
O Sir! the child of my old age
Lies there as cold as clay.

Except that grave, you scarce see one
That was not dug by me;
I'd rather dance upon 'em all
Than tread upon these three!

"Ay, Sexton! 'tis a touching tale."
You, Sir! are but a lad;
This month I'm in my seventieth year,
And still it makes me sad.

And Mary's sister told it me,
For three good hours and more;

Though I had heard it, in the main,
From Edward's self before.

Well! it passed off! the gentle Ellen
Did well nigh dote on Mary;
And she went oftener than before,
And Mary loved her more and more
She managed all the dairy.

To market she on market-days,
To church on Sundays came;
All seemed the same: all seemed so, Sir!
But all was not the same!

Had Ellen lost her mirth? Oh! no!
But she was seldom cheerful;
And Edward looked as if he thought
That Ellen's mirth was fearful.

When by herself, she to herself
Must sing some merry rhyme;
She could not now be glad for hours,
Yet silent all the time.

And when she soothed her friend, through all
Her soothing words 'twas plain
She had a sore grief of her own,
A haunting in her brain.

And oft she said, I'm not grown thin!
And then her wrist she spanned;
And once when Mary was down-cast,
She took her by the hand,
And gazed upon her, and at first
She gently pressed her hand;

Then harder, till her grasp at length
Did gripe like a convulsion!
Alas! said she, we ne'er can be
Made happy by compulsion!

And once her both arms suddenly
Round Mary's neck she flung,
And her heart panted, and she felt
The words upon her tongue.

She felt them coming, but no power
Had she the words to smother!
And with a kind of shriek she cried,
"Oh Christ! you're like your mother!"

So gentle Ellen now no more
Could make this sad house cheery;
And Mary's melancholy ways
Drove Edward wild and weary.

Lingering he raised his latch at eve,
Though tired in heart and limb:
He loved no other place, and yet
Home was no home to him.

One evening he took up a book,
And nothing in it read;
Then flung it down, and groaning cried,
"Oh! Heaven! that I were dead."

Mary looked up into his face,
And nothing to him said;
She tried to smile, and on his arm
Mournfully leaned her head.

And he burst into tears, and fell
Upon his knees in prayer:
"Her heart is broke! O God! my grief,
It is too great to bear!"

'Twas such a foggy time as makes
Old sextons, Sir! like me,
Rest on their spades to cough; the spring
Was late uncommonly.

And then the hot days, all at once,
They came, we knew not how:
You looked about for shade, when scarce
A leaf was on a bough.

It happened then ('twas in the bower
A furlong up the wood:
Perhaps you know the place, and yet
I scarce know how you should,—)

No path leads thither, 'tis not nigh
To any pasture-plot;
But clustered near the chattering brook,
Lone hollies marked the spot.

Those hollies of themselves a shape
As of an arbour took,
A close, round arbour; and it stands
Not three strides from a brook.

Within this arbour, which was still
With scarlet berries hung,
Were these three friends, one Sunday morn
Just as the first bell rung.

'Tis sweet to hear a brook, 'tis sweet
To hear the Sabbath-bell,
'Tis sweet to hear them both at once,
Deep in a woody dell.

His limbs along the moss, his head
Upon a mossy heap,
With shut-up senses, Edward lay:
That brook e'en on a working day
Might chatter one to sleep.

And he had passed a restless night,
And was not well in health;
The women sat down by his side,
And talked as 'twere by stealth.

"The sun peeps through the close thick leaves,
See, dearest Ellen! see!
'Tis in the leaves, a little sun,
No bigger than your ee;

"A tiny sun, and it has got
A perfect glory too;
Ten thousand threads and hairs of light,
Make up a glory, gay and bright,
Round that small orb, so blue."

And then they argued of those rays
What colour they might be;
Says this, "they're mostly green;" says that,
"They're amber-like to me."

So they sat chatting, while bad thoughts
Were troubling Edward's rest;
But soon they heard his hard quick pants,
And the thumping in his breast.

"A mother too!" these self-same words
Did Edward mutter plain;
His face was drawn back on itself,
With horror and huge pain.

Both groaned at once, for both knew well
What thoughts were in his mind;
When he waked up, and stared like one
That hath been just struck blind.

He sat upright; and ere the dream
Had had time to depart,
"O God, forgive me! (he exclaimed)
I have torn out her heart."

Then Ellen shrieked, and forthwith burst
Into ungentle laughter;
And Mary shivered, where she sat,
And never she smiled after.

1805-6.

Carmen reliquum in futurum tempus relegatum. To-morrow! and To-morrow! and To-morrow!——

MELANCHOLY.*

A FRAGMENT.

Stretch'd on a mouldered Abbey's broadest wall,
Where ruining ivies propped the ruins steep—
Her folded arms wrapping her tattered pall,
Had Melancholy mus'd herself to sleep.

The fern was press'd beneath her hair,
The dark green adder's tongue† was there;
And still as past the flagging sea-gale weak,
The long lank leaf bowed fluttering o'er her cheek.

That pallid cheek was flushed: her eager look
Beamed eloquent in slumber! Inly wrought,
Imperfect sounds her moving lips forsook,
And her bent forehead worked with troubled thought.
Strange was the dream——

1794.

COMPOSED DURING ILLNESS AND IN ABSENCE.‡

—Dim Hour! that sleep'st on pillowing clouds afar,
O rise, and yoke the turtles to thy car!
Bend o'er the traces, blame each lingering dove,
And give me to the bosom of my Love!
My gentle Love! caressing and carest,
With heaving heart shall cradle me to rest;
Shed the warm tear-drop from her smiling eyes,
Lull with fond woe, and med'cine me with sighs;

* See Note.

† A botanical mistake. The plant which the poet here describes is called the Hart's Tongue.

‡ See Note.

While finely-flushing float her kisses meek,
Like melted rubies, o'er my pallid cheek.
Chill'd by the night, the drooping rose of May
Mourns the long absence of the lovely Day:
Young Day, returning at her promised hour,
Weeps o'er the sorrows of the fav'rite flower,—
Weeps the soft dew, the balmy gale she sighs,
And darts a trembling lustre from her eyes.
New life and joy th' expanding flow'ret feels:
His pitying mistress mourns, and mourning heals!

1796.

THE VISIT OF THE GODS.

IMITATED FROM SCHILLER.

Never, believe me,
Appear the Immortals,
Never alone:
Scarce had I welcomed the sorrow-beguiler,
Iacchus! but in came boy Cupid the smiler;
Lo! Phœbus the glorious descends from his throne!
They advance, they float in, the Olympians all!
With divinities fills my
Terrestrial hall!

How shall I yield you
Due entertainment,
Celestial quire?
Me rather, bright guests! with your wings of upbuoyance,
Bear aloft to your homes, to your banquets of joyance,

That the roofs of Olympus may echo my lyre!
Hah! we mount! on their pinions they waft up my soul!
O give me the nectar!
O fill me the bowl!

Give him the nectar!
Pour out for the poet,
Hebe! pour free!
Quicken his eyes with celestial dew,
That Styx the detested no more he may view,
And like one of us Gods may conceit him to be!
Thanks, Hebe! I quaff it! Io Pæan, I cry!
The wine of the Immortals
Forbids me to die!

1798.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

I.

The shepherds went their hasty way,
And found the lowly stable-shed
Where the Virgin-Mother lay:
And now they checked their eager tread,
For to the Babe, that at her bosom clung,
A mother's song the Virgin-Mother sung.

II.

They told her how a glorious light,
Streaming from a heavenly throng,
Around them shone, suspending night!
While sweeter than a mother's song,
Blest Angels heralded the Saviour's birth,
Glory to God on high! and Peace on Earth.

III.

She listened to the tale divine,
And closer still the Babe she prest;
And while she cried, the Babe is mine!
The milk rushed faster to her breast:
Joy rose within her, like a summer's morn;
Peace, Peace on Earth! the Prince of Peace is born.

IV.

Thou Mother of the Prince of Peace,
Poor, simple, and of low estate!
That strife should vanish, battle cease,
O why should this thy soul elate?
Sweet music's loudest note, the poet's story,——
Didst thou ne'er love to hear of fame and glory?

V.

And is not War a youthful king,
A stately hero clad in mail?
Beneath his footsteps laurels spring;
Him Earth's majestic monarchs hail
Their friend, their playmate! and his bold bright eye
Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh.

VI.

"Tell this in some more courtly scene,
To maids and youths in robes of state!
I am a woman poor and mean,
And therefore is my soul elate.
War is a ruffian, all with guilt defiled,
That from the aged father tears his child!

VII.

"A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
He kills the sire and starves the son;

The husband kills, and from her board
Steals all his widow's toil had won;
Plunders God's world of beauty; rends away
All safety from the night, all comfort from the day.

VIII.

"Then wisely is my soul elate,
That strife should vanish, battle cease:
I'm poor and of a low estate,
The Mother of the Prince of Peace.
Joy rises in me, like a summer's morn:
Peace, Peace on Earth! the Prince of Peace is born."

1799.

LINES TO W. L.

WHILE HE SANG A SONG TO PURCELL'S MUSIC.

WHILE my young cheek retains its healthful hues,
And I have many friends who hold me dear;
L——! methinks, I would not often hear
Such melodies as thine, lest I should lose
All memory of the wrongs and sore distress,
For which my miserable brethren weep!
But should uncomforted misfortunes steep
My daily bread in tears and bitterness;
And if at death's dread moment I should lie
With no beloved face at my bed-side,
To fix the last glance of my closing eye,
Methinks, such strains, breathed by my angel-guide,
Would make me pass the cup of anguish by,
Mix with the blest, nor know that I had died!

1800.

THE KNIGHT'S TOMB.

Where is the grave of Sir Arthur O'Kellyn?
Where may the grave of that good man be?—
By the side of a spring, on the breast of Helvellyn,
Under the twigs of a young birch tree!
The oak that in summer was sweet to hear,
And rustled its leaves in the fall of the year,
And whistled and roared in the winter alone,
Is gone,—and the birch in its stead is grown.—
The Knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust;—
His soul is with the saints, I trust.

1802.

METRICAL FEET. LESSON FOR A BOY.

Trŏchĕe trīps frŏm lōng tŏ shōrt;
From long to long in solemn sort
Slōw Spōndēe stālks; strōng fōōt! yet ill able
Ēvĕr tŏ cōme ŭp wĭth Dāctўl trĭsўllăblĕ.
Ĭāmbĭcs mārch frŏm shōrt tŏ lōng;—
Wĭth ă lēāp ănd ă bōūnd thĕ swĭft Ānăpæsts thrōng;
One syllable long, with one short at each side,
Ămphĭbrăchўs hāstes wĭth ă stātelў stride;—
Fīrst ănd lāst bēĭng lōng, mĭddlĕ shōrt, Āmphĭmācer
Strĭkes hĭs thŭndĕrĭng hōōfs lĭke ă prōūd hīgh brĕd
Rācer.

If Derwent be innocent, steady, and wise,
And delight in the things of earth, water, and skies;

Tender warmth at his heart, with these metres to show it,
With sound sense in his brains, may make Derwent a poet,—
May crown him with fame, and must win him the love
Of his father on earth and his Father above.
My dear, dear child!
Could you stand upon Skiddaw, you would not from its whole ridge
See a man who so loves you as your fond S. T. Coleridge.

1807.

A CHILD'S EVENING PRAYER.

Ere on my bed my limbs I lay,
God grant me grace my prayers to say:
O God! preserve my mother dear
In strength and health for many a year;
And, O! preserve my father too,
And may I pay him reverence due;
And may I my best thoughts employ
To be my parents' hope and joy;
And, O! preserve my brothers both
From evil doings and from sloth,
And may we always love each other,
Our friends, our father, and our mother:
And still, O Lord, to me impart
An innocent and grateful heart,
That after my great sleep I may
Awake to thy eternal day!

Amen.

1808.

COMPLAINT.

How seldom, Friend! a good great man inherits
Honour or wealth, with all his worth and pains!
It sounds like stories from the land of spirits,
If any man obtain that which he merits,
Or any merit that which he obtains.

REPROOF.

For shame, dear Friend! renounce this canting strain!
What wouldst thou have a good great man obtain?
Place—titles—salary—a gilded chain—
Or throne of corses which his sword hath slain?—
Greatness and goodness are not means but ends!
Hath he not always treasures, always friends,
The good great man?—three treasures, love and light,
And calm thoughts, regular as infant's breath;
And three firm friends, more sure than day and night—
Himself, his Maker, and the angel Death.

1809.

PSYCHE.

The butterfly the ancient Grecians made
The soul's fair emblem, and its only name—
But of the soul, escaped the slavish trade
Of mortal life!—For in this earthly frame
Our's is the reptile's lot, much toil, much blame,
Manifold motions making little speed,
And to deform and kill the things whereon we feed.

1808.

AN ODE TO THE RAIN.

COMPOSED BEFORE DAYLIGHT, ON THE MORNING APPOINTED FOR THE DEPARTURE OF A VERY WORTHY, BUT NOT VERY PLEASANT VISITOR, WHOM IT WAS FEARED THE RAIN MIGHT DETAIN.

I KNOW it is dark; and though I have lain,
Awake, as I guess, an hour or twain,
I have not once opened the lids of my eyes,
But I lie in the dark, as a blind man lies.
O Rain! that I lie listening to,
You're but a doleful sound at best:
I owe you little thanks, 'tis true,
For breaking thus my needful rest!
Yet if, as soon as it is light,
O Rain! you will but take your flight,
I'll neither rail, nor malice keep,
Though sick and sore for want of sleep.

But only now, for this one day,
Do go, dear Rain! do go away!
O Rain! with your dull two-fold sound,
The clash hard by, and the murmur all round!
You know, if you know aught, that we,
Both night and day, but ill agree:
For days and months, and almost years,
Have limped on through this vale of tears,
Since body of mine, and rainy weather,
Have lived on easy terms together.
Yet if, as soon as it is light,
O Rain! you will but take your flight,

Though you should come again to-morrow,
And bring with you both pain and sorrow;
Though stomach should sicken and knees should swell—
I'll nothing speak of you but well.
But only now for this one day,
Do go, dear Rain! do go away!

Dear Rain! I ne'er refused to say
You're a good creature in your way;
Nay, I could write a book myself,
Would fit a parson's lower shelf,
Showing how very good you are.—
What then? sometimes it must be fair!
And if sometimes, why not to-day?
Do go, dear Rain! do go away!

Dear Rain! if I've been cold and shy,
Take no offence! I'll tell you why.
A dear old Friend e'en now is here,
And with him came my sister dear;
After long absence now first met,
Long months by pain and grief beset—
With three dear friends! in truth, we groan—
Impatiently to be alone.
We three, you mark! and not one more!
The strong wish makes my spirit sore.
We have so much to talk about,
So many sad things to let out;
So many tears in our eye-corners,
Sitting like little Jacky Horners—
In short, as soon as it is day,
Do go, dear Rain! do go away.

And this I'll swear to you, dear Rain!
Whenever you shall come again,
Be you as dull as e'er you could,
(And by the bye 'tis understood,
You're not so pleasant as you're good)
Yet, knowing well your worth and place,
I'll welcome you with cheerful face;
And though you stayed a week or more,
Were ten times duller than before;
Yet with kind heart, and right good will,
I'll sit and listen to you still;
Nor should you go away, dear Rain!
Uninvited to remain.
But only now, for this one day,
Do go, dear Rain! do go away.

1809.

A DAY DREAM.

My eyes make pictures, when they are shut:—
I see a fountain large and fair,
A willow and a ruined hut,
And thee, and me, and Mary there.
O Mary! make thy gentle lap our pillow!
Bend o'er us, like a bower, my beautiful green willow!

A wild-rose roofs the ruined shed,
And that and summer well agree:
And lo! where Mary leans her head,
Two dear names carved upon the tree!
And Mary's tears, they are not tears of sorrow:
Our sister and our friend will both be here to-morrow.

'Twas day! But now few, large, and bright
The stars are round the crescent moon!
And now it is a dark warm night,
The balmiest of the month of June!
A glow-wŏrm fallen, and on the marge remounting
Shines and its shadow shines, fit stars for our sweet fountain.

O ever—ever be thou blest!
For dearly, Asra, love I thee!
This brooding warmth across my breast,
This depth of tranquil bliss—ah me!
Fount, tree, and shed are gone, I know not whither,
But in one quiet room we three are still together.

The shadows dance upon the wall,
By the still dancing fire-flames made;
And now they slumber, moveless all!
And now they melt to one deep shade!
But not from me shall this mild darkness steal thee!
I dream thee with mine eyes, and at my heart I feel thee!

Thine eyelash on my cheek doth play—
'Tis Mary's hand upon my brow!
But let me check this tender lay
Which none may hear but she and thou!
Like the still hive at quiet midnight humming,
Murmur it to yourselves, ye two beloved women!

1814–16.

THE PAINS OF SLEEP.*

Ere on my bed my limbs I lay
It hath not been my use to pray
With moving lips or bended knees;
But silently, by slow degrees,
My spirit I to Love compose,
In humble trust mine eye-lids close,
With reverential resignation,
No wish conceived, no thought exprest,
Only a sense of supplication;
A sense o'er all my soul imprest
That I am weak, yet not unblest,
Since in me, round me, every where
Eternal strength and wisdom are.

But yester-night I prayed aloud
In anguish and in agony,
Up-starting from the fiendish crowd
Of shapes and thoughts that tortured me:
A lurid light, a trampling throng,
Sense of intolerable wrong,
And whom I scorned, those only strong!
Thirst of revenge, the powerless will
Still baffled, and yet burning still!
Desire with loathing strangely mixed
On wild or hateful objects fixed.
Fantastic passions! maddening brawl!
And shame and terror over all!

* See Note.

Deeds to be hid which were not hid,
Which all confused I could not know,
Whether I suffered, or I did:
For all seemed guilt, remorse or woe,
My own or others still the same
Life-stifling fear, soul-stifling shame.

So two nights passed: the night's dismay
Saddened and stunned the coming day.
Sleep the wide blessing, seemed to me
Distemper's worst calamity.
The third night, when my own loud scream
Had waked me from the fiendish dream,
O'ercome with sufferings strange and wild,
I wept as I had been a child;
And having thus my tears subdued
My anguish to a milder mood,
Such punishments, I said, were due
To natures deepliest stained with sin,—
For aye entempesting anew
The unfathomable hell within
The horror of their deeds to view,
To know and loathe, yet wish and do!
Such griefs with such men well agree,
But wherefore, wherefore fall on me?
To be beloved is all I need,
And whom I love, I love indeed.

A HYMN.*

My Maker! of thy power the trace
In every creature's form and face
The wond'ring soul surveys:
Thy wisdom, infinite above
Seraphic thought, a Father's love
As infinite displays!

From all that meets or eye or ear,
There falls a genial holy fear
Which, like the heavy dew of morn,
Refreshes while it bows the heart forlorn!

Great God! thy works how wondrous fair!
Yet sinful man didst thou declare
The whole Earth's voice and mind!
Lord, ev'n as Thou all-present art,
O may we still with heedful heart
Thy presence know and find!
Then, come, what will, of weal or woe,
Joy's bosom-spring shall steady flow;
For though 'tis Heaven Thyself to see,
Where but thy *Shadow* falls, Grief cannot be!—

1814.

* See Note.

HUMAN LIFE,

ON THE DENIAL OF IMMORTALITY.

If dead, we cease to be; if total gloom
Swallow up life's brief flash for aye, we fare
As summer-gusts, of sudden birth and doom,
Whose sound and motion not alone declare,
But are their whole of being! If the breath
Be life itself, and not its task and tent,
If even a soul like Milton's can know death;
O Man! thou vessel purposeless, unmeant,
Yet drone-hive strange of phantom purposes!
Surplus of nature's dread activity,
Which, as she gazed on some nigh-finished vase,
Retreating slow, with meditative pause,
She formed with restless hands unconsciously!
Blank accident! nothing's anomaly!
If rootless thus, thus substanceless thy state,
Go, weigh thy dreams, and be thy hopes, thy fears,
The counter-weights!—Thy laughter and thy tears
Mean but themselves, each fittest to create,
And to repay the other! Why rejoices
Thy heart with hollow joy for hollow good?
Why cowl thy face beneath the mourner's hood,
Why waste thy sighs, and thy lamenting voices,
Image of image, ghost of ghostly elf,
That such a thing as thou feel'st warm or cold?
Yet what and whence thy gain, if thou withhold
These costless shadows of thy shadowy self?
Be sad! be glad! be neither! seek, or shun!
Thou hast no reason why! Thou can'st have none;
Thy being's being is a contradiction.

1816.

SEPARATION.*

A SWORDED man whose trade is blood,
In grief, in anger, and in fear,
Thro' jungle, swamp, and torrent flood,
I seek the wealth you hold so dear!

The dazzling charm of outward form,
The power of gold, the pride of birth,
Have taken Woman's heart by storm—
Usurp'd the place of inward worth.

Is not true love of higher price
Than outward Form, tho' fair to see,
Wealth's glittering fairy-dome of ice,
Or echo of proud ancestry?—

O! Asra, Asra! couldst thou see
Into the bottom of my heart,
There's such a mine of Love for thee,
As almost might supply desert!

(This separation is, alas!
Too great a punishment to bear;
O! take my life, or let me pass
That life, that happy life, with her!)

The perils, erst with steadfast eye
Encounter'd, now I shrink to see—
Oh! I have heart enough to die—
Not half enough to part from Thee!

1816.

* See Note.

ON TAKING LEAVE OF ——, 1817.*

To know, to esteem, to love—and then to part,
Makes up life's tale to many a feeling heart!
O for some dear abiding-place of Love,
O'er which my spirit, like the mother dove,
Might brood with warming wings!—O fair as kind,
Were but one sisterhood with you combined,
(Your very image then in shape and mind)
Far rather would I sit in solitude,
The forms of memory all my mental food,
And dream of you, sweet sisters, (ah, not mine!)
And only dream of you (ah dream and pine!)
Than have the presence, and partake the pride,
And shine in the eye of all the world beside!

* See Note.

POEMS WRITTEN IN LATER LIFE.

Ἔρως ἀεὶ λάληδρος ἑταιρος.

In many ways doth the full heart reveal
The presence of the love it would conceal;
But in far more th' estranged heart lets know
The absence of the love, which yet it fain would show.

To be a Prodigal's favourite—then, worse truth,
A Miser's Pensioner—behold our lot!
O Man! that from thy fair and shining youth
Age might but take the things Youth needed not.

WORDSWORTH, *The Small Celandine.*

YOUTH AND AGE.*

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young!—Ah, woful when!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands,
How lightly then it flashed along:—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather,
When Youth and I liv'd in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old.
Ere I was old? Ah woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!

* See Note.

O Youth! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe, that Thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismist.
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

THE EXCHANGE.

We pledged our hearts, my love and I,—
I in my arms the maiden clasping;
I could not tell the reason why,
But, oh! I trembled like an aspen.

Her father's love she bade me gain;
I went, and shook like any reed!
I strove to act the man—in vain!
We had exchanged our hearts indeed.

THE ALIENATED MISTRESS:

A MADRIGAL.

(FROM AN UNFINISHED MELODRAMA.)

Lady. If Love be dead, (and you aver it!)
Tell me, Bard! where Love lies buried.

Poet. Love lies buried where 'twas born:
Ah, faithless Nymph! think it no scorn
If in my fancy I presume
To name thy bosom poor Love's Tomb.
And on that Tomb to read the line,—
"Here lies a Love that once was mine,
But took a chill, as I divine,
And died at length of a decline."

THE SUICIDE'S ARGUMENT.

Ere the birth of my life, if I wish'd it or no,
No question was ask'd me—it could not be so!
If the life was the question, a thing sent to try,
And to live on be Yes; what can No be? to die.

NATURE'S ANSWER.

Is't returned, as 'twas sent? Is't no worse for the wear?
Think first, what you are! Call to mind what you were!
I gave you innocence, I gave you hope,
Gave health, and genius, and an ample scope.
Return you me guilt, lethargy, despair?
Make out the invent'ry; inspect, compare!
Then die—if die you dare!

TO A LADY.

'Tis not the lily brow I prize,
Nor roseate cheeks nor sunny eyes,
Enough of lilies and of roses!
A thousand fold more dear to me
The look that gentle Love discloses,—
That Look which Love alone can see.

SANCTI DOMINICI PALLIUM;

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN POET AND FRIEND,

FOUND WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF AT THE BEGINNING OF BUTLER'S BOOK OF THE CHURCH.

POET.

I NOTE the moods and feelings men betray,
And heed them more than aught they do or say;
The lingering ghosts of many a secret deed
Still-born or haply strangled in its birth;
These best reveal the smooth man's inward creed!
These mark the spot where lies the treasure Worth!

—— made up of impudence and trick,
With cloven tongue prepared to hiss and lick,
Rome's brazen serpent—boldly dares discuss
The roasting of thy heart, O brave John Huss!
And with grim triumph and a truculent glee
Absolves anew the Pope-wrought perfidy,
That made an empire's plighted faith a lie,
And fix'd a broad stare on the Devil's eye—
(Pleased with the guilt, yet envy-stung at heart
To stand outmaster'd in his own black art!)
Yet ——

FRIEND.

Enough of ——! we're agreed,
Who now defends would then have done the deed.
But who not feels persuasion's gentle sway,
Who but must meet the proffer'd hand half way
When courteous ——

POET. (*aside*)

(Rome's smooth go-between!)

FRIEND.

Laments the advice that sour'd a milky queen—
(For "bloody" all enlighten'd men confess
An antiquated error of the press:)
Who rapt by zeal beyond her sex's bounds,
With actual cautery staunch'd the Church's wounds!
And tho' he deems, that with too broad a blur
We damn the French and Irish massacre,
Yet blames them both—and thinks the Pope might err!
What think you now? Boots it with spear and shield
Against such gentle foes to take the field
Whose beck'ning hands the mild Caduceus wield?

POET.

What think I now! Ev'n what I thought before;—
What —— boasts tho' —— may deplore,
Still I repeat, words lead me not astray
When the shown feeling points a different way.
Smooth —— can say grace at slander's feast,
And bless each haut-gout cook'd by monk or priest;
Leaves the full lie on ——'s gong to swell,
Content with half-truths that do just as well;
But duly decks his mitred comrade's flanks,
And with him shares the Irish nation's thanks!

So much for you, my Friend! who own a Church,
And would not leave your mother in the lurch!
But when a Liberal asks me what I think—
Scared by the blood and soot of Cobbett's ink,
And Jeffrey's glairy phlegm and Connor's foam,
In search of some safe parable I roam—
An emblem sometimes may comprise a tome!

Disclaimant of his uncaught grandsire's mood,
I see a tiger lapping kitten's food:
And who shall blame him that he purs applause,
When brother Brindle pleads the good old cause;
And frisks his pretty tail, and half unsheathes his claws!
Yet not the less, for modern lights unapt,
I trust the bolts and cross-bars of the laws
More than the Protestant milk all newly lapt,
Impearling a tame wild-cat's whiskered jaws!

LINES

SUGGESTED BY THE LAST WORDS OF BERENGARIUS, OB. ANNO DOM. 1088.

No more 'twixt conscience staggering and the Pope
Soon shall I now before my God appear,
By him to be acquitted, as I hope;
By him to be condemned, as I fear.—

REFLECTION ON THE ABOVE.

Lynx amid moles! had I stood by thy bed,
Be of good cheer, meek soul! I would have said:
I see a hope spring from that humble fear.
All are not strong alike through storms to steer
Right onward. What? though dread of threaten'd death
And dungeon torture made thy hand and breath
Inconstant to the truth within thy heart?
That truth, from which, through fear, thou twice didst start,

Fear haply told thee, was a learned strife,
Or not so vital as to claim thy life:
And myriads had reached Heaven, who never knew
Where lay the difference 'twixt the false and true!

Ye, who secure 'mid trophies not your own,
Judge him who won them when he stood alone,
And proudly talk of recreant Berengare—
O first the age, and then the man compare!
That age how dark! congenial minds how rare!
No host of friends with kindred zeal did burn!
No throbbing hearts awaited his return!
Prostrate alike when prince and peasant fell,
He only disenchanted from the spell,
Like the weak worm that gems the starless night,
Moved in the scanty circlet of his light:
And was it strange if he withdrew the ray
That did but guide the night-birds to their prey?

The ascending day-star with a bolder eye
Hath lit each dew-drop on our trimmer lawn!
Yet not for this, if wise, shall we decry
The spots and struggles of the timid dawn;
Lest so we tempt th' approaching noon to scorn
The mists and painted vapours of our morn.

NOT AT HOME.

That Jealousy may rule a mind
Where Love could never be
I know; but ne'er expect to find
Love without Jealousy.

She has a strange cast in her ee,
A swart sour-visaged maid—
But yet Love's own twin-sister she
His house-mate and his shade.

Ask for her and she'll be denied:—
What then? they only mean
Their mistress has lain down to sleep,
And can't just then be seen.

WORK WITHOUT HOPE.

LINES COMPOSED 21ST. FEBRUARY, 1827.

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrighten'd, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?
Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And hope without an object cannot live.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP OPPOSITE.

Her attachment may differ from yours in degree,
Provided they are both of one kind;
But Friendship how tender so ever it be
Gives no accord to Love, however refined.

Love, that meets not with Love, its true nature revealing,
Grows ashamed of itself, and demurs:
If you cannot lift hers up to your state of feeling,
You must lower down your state to hers.

MOLES.

—They shrink in, as Moles
(Nature's mute monks, live mandrakes of the ground)
Creep back from Light—then listen for its sound;—
See but to dread, and dread they know not why—
The natural alien of their negative eye.

DUTY SURVIVING SELF-LOVE.

THE ONLY SURE FRIEND OF DECLINING LIFE. A SOLILOQUY.

Unchanged within to see all changed without
Is a blank lot and hard to bear, no doubt.
Yet why at others' wanings should'st thou fret?
Then only might'st thou feel a just regret,
Hadst thou withheld thy love or hid thy light
In selfish forethought of neglect and slight.
O wiselier then, from feeble yearnings freed,
While, and on whom, thou may'st—shine on! nor heed
Whether the object by reflected light
Return thy radiance or absorb it quite:
And though thou notest from thy safe recess
Old friends burn dim, like lamps in noisome air,
Love them for what they are; nor love them less,
Because to thee they are not what they were.

SONG.

Though veiled in spires of myrtle wreath,
Love is a sword that cuts its sheath,
And thro' the clefts itself has made
We spy the flashes of the Blade!

But thro' the clefts itself has made
We likewise see Love's flashing blade,
By rust consumed or snapt in twain·
And only Hilt and Stump remain.

PHANTOM OR FACT?

A DIALOGUE IN VERSE.

AUTHOR.

A LOVELY form there sate beside my bed,
And such a feeding calm its presence shed,
A tender love so pure from earthly leaven
That I unnethe the fancy might control,
'Twas my own spirit newly come from heaven,
Wooing its gentle way into my soul!
But ah! the change—It had not stirr'd, and yet—
Alas! that change how fain would I forget!
That shrinking back, like one that had mistook!
That weary, wandering, disavowing look!
'Twas all another, feature, look, and frame,
And still, methought, I knew, it was the same!

FRIEND.

This riddling tale, to what does it belong?
Is't history? vision? or an idle song?
Or rather say at once, within what space
Of time this wild disastrous change took place?

AUTHOR.

Call it a moment's work (and such it seems)
This tale's a fragment from the life of dreams;
But say, that years matured the silent strife,
And 'tis a record from the dream of life.

TO A LADY

OFFENDED BY A SPORTIVE OBSERVATION THAT WOMEN HAVE NO SOULS.

Nay, dearest Anna! why so grave?
I said you had no soul, 'tis true!
For what you are, you cannot have:
'Tis I, that have one since I first had you!

I have heard of reasons manifold
Why Love must needs be blind,
But this the best of all I hold—
His eyes are in his mind.

What outward form and feature are
He guesseth but in part;
But what within is good and fair
He sēeth with the heart.

"THE LOVE THAT MAKETH NOT ASHAMED."

Where true Love burns Desire is Love's pure flame;
It is the reflex of our earthly frame,
That takes its meaning from the nobler part,
And but translates the language of the heart.

CONSTANCY TO AN IDEAL OBJECT.

Since all that beat about in Nature's range,
Or veer or vanish; why shouldst thou remain
The only constant in a world of change,
O yearning thought! that liv'st but in the brain?
Call to the hours, that in the distance play,
The faery people of the future day—
Fond thought! not one of all that shining swarm
Will breathe on thee with life-enkindling breath,
Till when, like strangers shelt'ring from a storm,
Hope and Despair meet in the porch of Death!
Yet still thou haunt'st me; and though well I see,
She is not thou, and only thou art she,
Still, still as though some dear embodied good,
Some living love before my eyes there stood
With answering look a ready ear to lend,
I mourn to thee and say!—"Ah! loveliest friend!
That this the meed of all my toils might be,
To have a home, an English home, and thee!"
Vain repetition! Home and Thou are one.
The peacefull'st cot, the moon shall shine upon,
Lull'd by the thrush and waken'd by the lark,
Without thee were but a becalmed bark,
Whose helmsman on an ocean waste and wide
Sits mute and pale his mouldering helm beside.
And art thou nothing? Such thou art, as when
The woodman winding westward up the glen
At wintry dawn, where o'er the sheep-track's maze
The viewless snow-mist weaves a glist'ning haze,

Sees full before him, gliding without tread,
An image* with a glory round its head;
The enamoured rustic worships its fair hues,
Nor knows he makes the shadow he pursues!

FANCY IN NUBIBUS,

OR THE POET IN THE CLOUDS.

O! IT is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily persuaded eyes
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
Of a friend's fancy; or with head bent low
And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks; and then, a traveller, go
From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
Or list'ning to the tide, with closed sight,
Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
Beheld the Iliad and the Odyssee
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea.

* This phenomenon, which the author has himself experienced, and of which the reader may find a description in one of the earlier volumes of the Manchester Philosophical Transactions, is applied figuratively in the following passage of the Aids to Reflection.

"Pindar's fine remark respecting the different effects of music, on different characters, holds equally true of Genius; as many as are not delighted by it are disturbed, perplexed, irritated. The beholder either recognises it as a projected form of his own being, that moves before him with a glory round its head, or recoils from it as a spectre."—*Aids to Reflection*, p. 220.

THE BLOSSOMING OF THE SOLITARY DATE-TREE.

A LAMENT.

I SEEM to have an indistinct recollection of having read either in one of the ponderous tomes of George of Venice, or in some other compilation from the uninspired Hebrew writers, an apologue or Rabbinical tradition to the following purpose:

While our first parents stood before their offended Maker, and the last words of the sentence were yet sounding in Adam's ear, the guileful false serpent, a counterfeit and a usurper from the beginning, presumptuously took on himself the character of advocate or mediator, and pretending to intercede for Adam, exclaimed: "Nay, Lord, in thy justice, not so! for the man was the least in fault. Rather let the Woman return at once to the dust, and let Adam remain in this thy Paradise." And the word of the Most High answered Satan: "The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. Treacherous Fiend! if with guilt like thine, it had been possible for thee to have the heart of a Man, and to feel the yearning of a human soul for its counterpart, the sentence, which thou now counsellest, should have been inflicted on thyself."

The title of the following poem was suggested by a fact mentioned by Linnæus, of a date-tree in a nobleman's garden which year after year had put forth a full show of blossoms, but never produced fruit, till a branch from another date-tree had been conveyed from a distance of some hundred leagues. The first leaf of the MS. from which the poem has been transcribed, and which contained the two or three introductory stanzas, is wanting: and the author has in vain taxed his memory to repair the loss. But a rude draught of the poem contains the substance of the stanzas, and the reader is requested to receive it as the substitute. It is not impossible, that some congenial spirit, whose years do not exceed those of the author, at the time the poem was written, may find a pleasure in restoring the Lament to its original integrity by a reduction of the thoughts to the requisite metre.

I.

Beneath the blaze of a tropical sun the mountain peaks are the thrones of frost, through the absence of objects to reflect the rays. "What no one with us shares, seems scarce our own." The presence of a one,

The best beloved, who loveth me the best,

is for the heart, what the supporting air from within is for the hollow globe with its suspended car. Deprive it of this, and all without, that would have buoyed it aloft even to the seat of the gods, becomes a burthen and crushes it into flatness.

II.

The finer the sense for the beautiful and the lovely, and the fairer and lovelier the object presented to the sense; the more exquisite the individual's capacity of joy, and the more ample his means and opportunities of enjoyment, the more heavily will he feel the ache of solitariness, the more unsubstantial becomes the feast spread around him. What matters it, whether in fact the viands and the ministering graces are shadowy or real, to him who has not hand to grasp nor arms to embrace them?

III.

Imagination; honourable aims;
Free commune with the choir that cannot die;
Science and song; delight in little things,
The buoyant child surviving in the man;
Fields, forests, ancient mountains, ocean, sky,
With all their voices—O dare I accuse
My earthly lot as guilty of my spleen,
Or call my destiny niggard! O no! no!

It is her largeness, and her overflow,
Which being incomplete, disquieteth me so!

IV.

For never touch of gladness stirs my heart,
But tim'rously beginning to rejoice
Like a blind Arab, that from sleep doth start
In lonesome tent, I listen for thy voice.
Beloved! 'tis not thine; thou art not there!
Then melts the bubble into idle air,
And wishing without hope I restlessly despair.

V.

The mother with anticipated glee
Smiles o'er the child, that, standing by her chair
And flatt'ning its round cheek upon her knee,
Looks up, and doth its rosy lips prepare
To mock the coming sounds. At that sweet sight
She hears her own voice with a new delight;
And if the babe perchance should lisp the notes aright,

VI.

Then is she tenfold gladder than before!
But should disease or chance the darling take,
What then avail those songs, which sweet of yore
Were only sweet for their sweet echo's sake?
Dear maid! no prattler at a mother's knee
Was e'er so dearly prized as I prize thee:
Why was I made for Love and Love denied to me?

THE TWO FOUNTS.

STANZAS ADDRESSED TO A LADY ON HER RECOVERY WITH UNBLEMISHED LOOKS FROM A SEVERE ATTACK OF PAIN.

'Twas my last waking thought, how it could be
That thou, sweet friend, such anguish shouldst endure;
When straight from Dreamland came a Dwarf, and he
Could tell the cause, forsooth, and knew the cure.

Methought he fronted me with peering look
Fix'd on my heart; and read aloud in game
The loves and griefs therein, as from a book;
And utter'd praise like one who wish'd to blame.

In every heart (quoth he) since Adam's sin
Two Founts there are, of suffering and of cheer!
That to let forth, and this to keep within!
But she, whose aspect I find imaged here,

Of Pleasure only will to all dispense,
That Fount alone unlock, by no distress
Choked or turn'd inward, but still issue thence
Unconquer'd cheer, persistent loveliness.

As on the driving cloud the shiny bow,
That gracious thing made up of tears and light,
Mid the wild rack and rain that slants below
Stands smiling forth, unmoved and freshly bright;—

As though the spirits of all lovely flowers,
Inweaving each its wreath and dewy crown,
Or ere they sank to earth in vernal showers,
Had built a bridge to tempt the angels down.

Ev'n so, Eliza! on that face of thine,
On that benignant face, whose look alone
(The soul's translucence thro' her crystal shrine!)
Has power to soothe all anguish but thine own,

A beauty hovers still, and ne'er takes wing,
But with a silent charm compels the stern
And tort'ring Genius of the bitter spring,
To shrink aback, and cower upon his urn.

Who then needs wonder, if (no outlet found
In passion, spleen, or strife,) the fount of pain
O'erflowing beats against its lovely mound,
And in wild flashes shoots from heart to brain?

Sleep, and the Dwarf with that unsteady gleam
On his raised lip, that aped a critic smile,
Had passed: yet I, my sad thoughts to beguile,
Lay weaving on the tissue of my dream;

Till audibly at length I cried, as though
Thou had'st indeed been present to my eyes,
O sweet, sweet sufferer; if the case be so,
I pray thee, be less good, less sweet, less wise!

In every look a barbed arrow send,
On those soft lips let scorn and anger live!
Do any thing, rather than thus, sweet friend!
Hoard for thyself the pain, thou wilt not give!

LIMBO.

'Tis a strange place, this Limbo!—not a Place,
Yet name it so;—where Time and weary Space
Fettered from flight, with night-mare sense of fleeing,
Strive for their last crepuscular half-being;—
Lank Space and scytheless Time with branny hands
Barren and soundless as the measuring sands,
Not mark'd by flit of Shades,—unmeaning they
As moonlight on the dial of the day!
But that is lovely—looks like human Time,—
An old man with a steady look sublime,
That stops his earthly task to watch the skies;
But he is blind—a statue hath such eyes;—
Yet having moonward turn'd his face by chance,
Gazes the orb with moon-like countenance,
With scant white hairs, with foretop bald and high,
He gazes still,—his eyeless face all eye;—
As 'twere an organ full of silent sight,
His whole face seemeth to rejoice in light!
Lip touching lip, all moveless, bust and limb—
He seems to gaze at that which seems to gaze on him!
No such sweet sights doth Limbo den immure,
Wall'd round, and made a spirit-jail secure,
By the mere horror of blank Naught-at-all,
Whose circumambience doth these ghosts enthral.
A lurid thought is growthless, dull Privation,
Yet that is but a Purgatory curse;
Hell knows a fear far worse,
A fear—a future state;—'tis positive Negation!

COLOGNE.

In Köhln, a town of monks and bones,
And pavements fang'd with murderous stones,
And rags, and hags, and hideous wenches;
I counted two and seventy stenches,
All well defined, and several stinks!
Ye Nymphs that reign o'er sewers and sinks,
The river Rhine, it is well known,
Doth wash your city of Cologne;
But tell me, Nymphs! what power divine
Shall henceforth wash the river Rhine?

ON MY JOYFUL DEPARTURE FROM THE SAME CITY.

As I am rhymer,
And now at least a merry one,
Mr. Mum's Rudesheimer
And the church of St. Geryon
Are the two things alone
That deserve to be known
In the body and soul-stinking town of Cologne.

NE PLUS ULTRA.

Sole Positive of Night!
Antipathist of Light!
Fate's only essence! primal scorpion rod—
The one permitted opposite of God!—
Condensed blackness and abysmal storm
Compacted to one sceptre
Arms the Grasp enorm—
The Intercepter—
The Substance that still casts the shadow Death!—
The Dragon foul and fell—
The unrevealable,
And hidden one, whose breath
Gives wind and fuel to the fires of Hell!—
Ah! sole despair
Of both th' eternities in Heaven!
Sole interdict of all-bedewing prayer,
The all-compassionate!
Save to the Lampads Seven,
Reveal'd to none of all th' Angelic State,
Save to the Lampads Seven,
That watch the throne of Heaven!

NAMES.

I asked my fair one happy day,
What I should call her in my lay;
By what sweet name from Rome or Greece;
Lalage, Neæra, Chloris,
Sappho, Lesbia, or Doris,
Arethusa or Lucrece.

"Ah!" replied my gentle fair,
"Beloved, what are names but air?
Choose thou whatever suits the line;
Call me Sappho, call me Chloris,
Call me Lalage or Doris,
Only, only call me Thine."

LINES

TO A COMIC AUTHOR, ON AN ABUSIVE REVIEW.

What though the chilly wide-mouth'd quacking chorus
From the rank swamps of murk Review-land croak:
So was it, neighbour, in the times before us,
When Momus, throwing on his Attic cloak,
Romped with the Graces; and each tickled Muse
(That Turk, Dan Phœbus, whom bards call divine,
Was married to—at least, he kept—all nine)
Fled, but still with reverted faces ran;
Yet, somewhat the broad freedoms to excuse,
They had allur'd the audacious Greek to use,
Swore they mistook him for their own good man.
This Momus—Aristophanes on earth
Men called him—maugre all his wit and worth
Was croaked and gabbled at. How, then, should you,
Or I, friend, hope to 'scape the skulking crew?
No! laugh, and say aloud, in tones of glee,
"I hate the quacking tribe, and they hate me!"

THE IMPROVISATORE;

OR, "JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO, JOHN."

Scene—A spacious drawing-room, with music-room adjoining.

Katharine. What are the words?

Eliza. Ask our friend, the Improvisatore; here he comes. Kate has a favour to ask of you, Sir; it is that you will repeat the ballad that Mr. ——sang so sweetly.

Friend. It is in Moore's Irish Melodies; but I do not recollect the words distinctly. The moral of them, however, I take to be this:—

> Love would remain the same if true,
> When we were neither young nor new;
> Yea, and in all within the will that came,
> By the same proofs would show itself the same

Eliz. What are the lines you repeated from Beaumont and Fletcher, which my mother admired so much? It begins with something about two vines so close that their tendrils intermingle.

Fri. You mean Charles' speech to Angelina, in "The Elder Brother."

> We'll live together, like two neighbour vines,
> Circling our souls and loves in one another!
> We'll spring together, and we'll bear one fruit;
> One joy shall make us smile, and one grief mourn;
> One age go with us, and one hour of death
> Shall close our eyes, and one grave make us happy.

Kath. A precious boon, that would go far to reconcile one to old age—this love—if true! But is there any such true love?

Fri. I hope so.

Kath. But do you believe it?

Eliz. (*eagerly*). I am sure he does.

Fri. From a man turned of fifty, Katharine, I imagine, expects a less confident answer.

Kath. A more sincere one, perhaps.

Fri. Even though he should have obtained the nick-name of Improvisatore, by perpetrating charades and extempore verses at Christmas times?

Eliz. Nay, but be serious.

Fri. Serious! Doubtless. A grave personage of my years giving a love-lecture to two young ladies, cannot well be otherwise. The difficulty, I suspect, would be for them to remain so. It will be asked whether I am not the "elderly gentleman" who sate "despairing beside a clear stream," with a willow for his wig-block.

Eliz. Say another word, and we will call it downright affectation.

Kath. No! we will be affronted, drop a courtesy, and ask pardon for our presumption in expecting that Mr. —— would waste his sense on two insignificant girls.

Fri. Well, well, I will be serious. Hem! Now then commences the discourse; Mr. Moore's song being the text. Love, as distinguished from Friendship, on the one hand, and from the passion that too often usurps its name, on the other—

Lucius. (*Eliza's brother, who had just joined the trio, in a whisper to the Friend.*) But is not Love the union of both?

Fri. (*aside to Lucius*). He never loved who thinks so.

Eliz. Brother, we don't want you. There! Mrs. H. cannot arrange the flower vase without you. Thank you, Mrs. Hartman.

Luc. I'll have my revenge! I know what I will say!

Eliz. Off! Off! Now, dear Sir,—Love, you were saying—

Fri. Hush! Preaching, you mean, Eliza.

Eliz. (*impatiently*). Pshaw!

Fri. Well then, I was saying that love, truly such, is itself not the most common thing in the world; and mutual love still less so. But that enduring personal attachment, so beautifully delineated by Erin's sweet melodist, and still more touchingly, perhaps, in the well-known ballad, "John Anderson, my Jo, John," in addition to a depth and constancy of character of no every-day occurrence, supposes a peculiar sensibility and tenderness of nature; a constitutional communicativeness and utterancy of heart and soul; a delight in the detail of sympathy, in the outward and visible signs of the sacrament within—to count, as it were, the pulses of the life of love. But above all, it supposes a soul, which, even in the pride and summer-tide of life—even in the lustihood of health and strength, had felt oftenest and prized highest that which age cannot take away, and which, in all our lovings, is *the* Love;——

Eliz. There is something here (*pointing to her heart*) that seems to understand you, but wants the word that would make it understand itself.

Kath. I, too, seem to feel what you mean. Interpret the feeling for us.

Fri. —— I mean that willing sense of the unsufficingness of the self for itself, which predisposes a generous

nature to see, in the total being of another, the supplement and completion of its own;—that quiet, perpetual seeking which the presence of the beloved object modulates, not suspends, where the heart momently finds, and, finding, again seeks on;—lastly, when "life's changeful orb has passed the full," a confirmed faith in the nobleness of humanity, thus brought home and pressed, as it were, to the very bosom of hourly experience; it supposes, I say, a heartfelt reverence for worth, not the less deep because divested of its solemnity by habit, by familiarity, by mutual infirmities, and even by a feeling of modesty which will arise in delicate minds, when they are conscious of possessing the same or the correspondent excellence in their own characters. In short, there must be a mind, which, while it feels the beautiful and the excellent in the beloved as its own, and by right of love appropriates it, can call Goodness its playfellow; and dares make sport of time and infirmity, while, in the person of a thousand-foldly endeared partner, we feel for aged virtue the caressing fondness that belongs to the innocence of childhood, and repeat the same attentions and tender courtesies which had been dictated by the same affection to the same object when attired in feminine loveliness or in manly beauty.

Eliz. What a soothing—what an elevating thought!

Kath. If it be not only a mere fancy.

Fri. At all events, these qualities which I have enumerated, are rarely found united in a single individual. How much more rare must it be, that two such individuals should meet together in this wide world under circumstances that admit of their union as Hus-

band and Wife. A person may be highly estimable on the whole, nay, amiable as neighbour, friend, housemate—in short, in all the concentric circles of attachment save only the last and inmost; and yet from how many causes be estranged from the highest perfection in this! Pride, coldness, or fastidiousness of nature, worldly cares, an anxious or ambitious disposition, a passion for display, a sullen temper,—one or the other—too often proves "the dead fly in the compost of spices," and any one is enough to unfit it for the precious balm of unction. For some mighty good sort of people, too, there is not seldom a sort of solemn saturnine, or, if you will, ursine vanity, that keeps itself alive by sucking the paws of its own self-importance. And as this high sense, or rather sensation of their own value is, for the most part, grounded on negative qualities, so they have no better means of preserving the same but by negatives—that is, by not doing or saying any thing, that might be put down for fond, silly, or nonsensical;—or (to use their own phrase) by never forgetting themselves, which some of their acquaintance are uncharitable enough to think the most worthless object they could be employed in remembering.

Eliz. (*in answer to a whisper from Katharine*). To a hair! He must have sate for it himself. Save me from such folks! But they are out of the question.

Fri. True! but the same effect is produced in thousands by the too general insensibility to a very important truth; this, namely, that the misery of human life is made up of large masses, each separated from the other by certain intervals. One year, the death of a child; years after, a failure in trade; after another longer or shorter interval, a daughter may have married

unhappily;—in all but the singularly unfortunate, the integral parts that compose the sum total of the unhappiness of a man's life, are easily counted, and distinctly remembered. The happiness of life, on the contrary, is made up of minute fractions—the little, soon-forgotten charities of a kiss, a smile, a kind look, a heartfelt compliment in the disguise of playful raillery, and the countless other infinitesimals of pleasurable thought and genial feeling.

Kath. Well, Sir; you have said quite enough to make me despair of finding a "John Anderson, my Jo, John," with whom to totter down the hill of life.

Fri. Not so! Good men are not, I trust, so much scarcer than good women, but that what another would find in you, you may hope to find in another. But well, however, may that boon be rare, the possession of which would be more than an adequate reward for the rarest virtue.

Eliz. Surely, he, who has described it so well, must have possessed it?

Fri. If he were worthy to have possessed it, and had believingly anticipated and not found it, how bitter the disappointment! (Then, after a pause of a few minutes),

ANSWER, *ex improviso.*

Yes, yes! that boon, life's richest treat
He had, or fancied that he had;
Say, 'twas but in his own conceit—
  The fancy made him glad!
Crown of his cup, and garnish of his dish,
The boon, prefigured in his earliest wish,
The fair fulfilment of his poesy,
When his young heart first yearn'd for sympathy!

But e'en the meteor offspring of the brain
Unnourished wane;
Faith asks her daily bread,
And Fancy must be fed.
Now so it chanced—from wet or dry,
It boots not how—I know not why—
She missed her wonted food; and quickly
Poor Fancy stagger'd and grew sickly.
Then came a restless state, 'twixt yea and nay,
His faith was fix'd, his heart all ebb and flow;
Or like a bark, in some half-shelter'd bay,
Above its anchor driving to and fro.

That boon, which but to have possest
In a belief, gave life a zest—
Uncertain both what it had been,
And if by error lost, or luck;
And what it was;—an evergreen
Which some insidious blight had struck,
Or annual flower, which, past its blow,
No vernal spell shall e'er revive;
Uncertain, and afraid to know,
Doubts toss'd him to and fro:
Hope keeping Love, Love Hope alive,
Like babes bewildered in the snow,
That cling and huddle from the cold
In hollow tree or ruin'd fold.

Those sparkling colours, once his boast
Fading, one by one away,
Thin and hueless as a ghost,
Poor Fancy on her sick bed lay;
Ill at distance, worse when near,

Telling her dreams to jealous Fear!
Where was it then, the sociable sprite
That crown'd the Poet's cup and deck'd his dish!
Poor shadow cast from an unsteady wish,
Itself a substance by no other right
But that it intercepted Reason's light;
It dimm'd his eye, it darken'd on his brow,
A peevish mood, a tedious time, I trow!
Thank Heaven! 'tis not so now.

O bliss of blissful hours!
The boon of Heaven's decreeing,
While yet in Eden's bowers
Dwelt the first husband and his sinless mate!
The one sweet plant, which, piteous Heaven agreeing,
They bore with them thro' Eden's closing gate!
Of life's gay summer tide the sovran rose!
Late autumn's amaranth, that more fragrant blows
When passion's flowers all fall or fade;
If this were ever his, in outward being,
Or but his own true love's projected shade,
Now that at length by certain proof he knows,
That whether real or a magic show,
Whate'er it was, it is no longer so;
Though heart be lonesome, hope laid low,
Yet, Lady! deem him not unblest:
The certainty that struck hope dead,
Hath left contentment in her stead:
And that is next to best!

ALICE DU CLOS:

OR THE FORKED TONGUE. A BALLAD.

"One word with two meanings is the traitor's shield and shaft: and a slit tongue be his blazon!"—*Caucasian Proverb.*

"The Sun is not yet risen,
But the dawn lies red on the dew:
Lord Julian has stolen from the hunters away,
Is seeking, Lady, for you.
Put on your dress of green,
Your buskins and your quiver;
Lord Julian is a hasty man,
Long waiting brook'd he never.
I dare not doubt him, that he means
To wed you on a day,
Your lord and master for to be,
And you his lady gay.
O Lady! throw your book aside!
I would not that my Lord should chide."

Thus spake Sir Hugh the vassal knight
To Alice, child of old Du Clos,
As spotless fair, as airy light
As that moon-shiny doe,
The gold star on its brow, her sire's ancestral crest,
For ere the lark had left his nest,
She in the garden bower below
Sate loosely wrapped in maiden white,
Her face half drooping from the sight,
A snow-drop on a tuft of snow!

O close your eyes, and strive to see
The studious maid, with book on knee,—
Ah! earliest opened flower;
While yet with keen unblunted light
The morning star shone opposite
The lattice of her bower—
Alone of all the starry host,
As if in prideful scorn
Of flight and fear he stay'd behind,
To brave th' advancing morn.

O! Alice could read passing well,
And she was conning then
Dan Ovid's mazy tale of loves,
And gods, and beasts, and men.

The vassal's speech, his taunting vein,
It thrill'd like venom thro' her brain;
Yet never from the book
She rais'd her head, nor did she deign
The knight a single look.

"Off, traitor friend! how dar'st thou fix
Thy wanton gaze on me?
And why, against my earnest suit,
Does Julian send by thee?

"Go, tell thy Lord, that slow is sure:
Fair speed his shafts to-day!
I follow here a stronger lure,
And chase a gentler prey."

She said: and with a baleful smile
The vassal knight reel'd off—

Like a huge billow from a bark
Toil'd in the deep sea-trough,
That shouldering sideways in mid plunge,
Is travers'd by a flash.
And staggering onward, leaves the ear
With dull and distant crash.

And Alice sate with troubled mien
A moment; for the scoff was keen,
And thro' her veins did shiver!
Then rose and donn'd her dress of green,
Her buskins and her quiver.

There stands the flow'ring may-thorn tree!
From thro' the veiling mist you see
The black and shadowy stem;—
Smit by the sun the mist in glee
Dissolves to lightsome jewelry—
Each blossom hath its gem!

With tear-drop glittering to a smile,
The gay maid on the garden-stile
Mimics the hunter's shout.
"Hip! Florian, hip! To horse, to horse!
Go, bring the palfrey out.

"My Julian's out with all his clan,
And, bonny boy, you wis,
Lord Julian is a hasty man,
Who comes late, comes amiss."

Now Florian was a stripling squire,
A gallant boy of Spain,
That toss'd his head in joy and pride,
Behind his Lady fair to ride,
But blush'd to hold her train.

The huntress is in her dress of green,—
And forth they go; she with her bow,
Her buskins and her quiver!—
The squire—no younger e'er was seen—
With restless arm and laughing een,
He makes his javelin quiver.

And had not Ellen stay'd the race,
And stopp'd to see, a moment's space,
The whole great globe of light
Give the last parting kiss-like touch
To the eastern ridge, it lack'd not much,
They had o'erta'en the knight.

It chanced that up the covert lane,
Where Julian waiting stood,
A neighbour knight prick'd on to join
The huntsmen in the wood.

And with him must Lord Julian go,
Tho' with an anger'd mind:
Betroth'd not wedded to his bride,
In vain he sought, 'twixt shame and pride,
Excuse to stay behind.

He bit his lip, he wrung his glove,
He look'd around, he look'd above,
But pretext none could find or frame!
Alas! alas! and well-a-day!
It grieves me sore to think, to say,
That names so seldom meet with Love,
Yet Love wants courage without a name!

Straight from the forest's skirt the trees
O'er-branching, made an aisle,

Where hermit old might pace and chaunt
As in a minster's pile.

From underneath its leafy screen,
And from the twilight shade,
You pass at once into a green,
A green and lightsome glade.

And there Lord Julian sate on steed;
Behind him, in a round,
Stood knight and squire, and menial train;
Against the leash the greyhounds strain;
The horses paw'd the ground.

When up the alley green, Sir Hugh
Spurr'd in upon the sward,
And mute, without a word, did he
Fall in behind his lord.

Lord Julian turn'd his steed half round.—
"What! doth not Alice deign
To accept your loving convoy, knight?
Or doth she fear our woodland sleight,
And joins us on the plain?"

With stifled tones the knight replied,
And look'd askance on either side,—
"Nay, let the hunt proceed!—
The Lady's message that I bear,
I guess would scantly please your ear,
And less deserves your heed.

"You sent betimes. Not yet unbarr'd
I found the middle door;—
Two stirrers only met my eyes,
Fair Alice, and one more.

"I came unlook'd for: and, it seem'd,
In an unwelcome hour;
And found the daughter of Du Clos
Within the lattic'd bower.

"But hush! the rest may wait. If lost,
No great loss, I divine;
And idle words will better suit
A fair maid's lips than mine."

"God's wrath! speak out, man," Julian cried,
O'ermastered by the sudden smart;—
And feigning wrath, sharp, blunt, and rude,
The knight his subtle shift pursued.—
"Scowl not at me; command my skill,
To lure your hawk back, if you will,
But not a woman's heart.

"'Go! (said she) tell him,—slow is sure;
Fair speed his shafts to-day!
I follow here a stronger lure,
And chase a gentler prey.'

"The game, pardie, was full in sight,
That then did, if I saw aright,
The fair dame's eyes engage:
For turning, as I took my ways,
I saw them fixed with steadfast gaze
Full on her wanton page."

The last word of the traitor knight
It had but entered Julian's ear,—
From two o'erarching oaks between,
With glist'ning helm-like cap is seen,
Borne on in giddy cheer,

A youth, that ill his steed can guide;
Yet with reverted face doth ride,
As answering to a voice,
That seems at once to laugh and chide—
"Not mine, dear mistress," still he cried,
"'Tis this mad filly's choice."

With sudden bound, beyond the boy,
See! see! that face of hope and joy,
That regal front! those cheeks aglow!
Thou needed'st but the crescent sheen,
A quiver'd Dian to have been,
Thou lovely child of old Du Clos!

Dark as a dream Lord Julian stood,
Swift as a dream, from forth the wood,
Sprang on the plighted Maid!
With fatal aim, and frantic force,
The shaft was hurl'd!—a lifeless corse,
Fair Alice from her vaulting horse,
Lies bleeding on the glade.

FROM THE GERMAN.

Know'st thou the land where the pale citrons grow,
The golden fruits in darker foliage glow?
Soft blows the wind that breathes from that blue sky!
Still stands the myrtle and the laurel high!
Know'st thou it well that land, beloved Friend?
Thither with thee, O thither would I wend!

Anxious to associate the name of a most dear and honoured friend with my own, I solicited and obtained the permission of Professor J. H. Green to permit the insertion of the two following poems, by him composed.—S. T. Coleridge.

MORNING INVITATION TO A CHILD.

The house is a prison, the school-room's a cell;
Leave study and books for the upland and dell;
Lay aside the dull poring, quit home and quit care;
Sally forth! Sally forth! Let us breathe the fresh air!
The sky dons its holiday mantle of blue;
The sun sips his morning refreshment of dew;
Shakes joyously laughing his tresses of light,
And here and there turns his eye piercing and bright;
Then jocund mounts up on his glorious car,
With smiles to the morn,—for he means to go far;—
While the clouds, that had newly paid court at his levee,
Spread sail to the breeze, and glide off in a bevy.
Tree, and tree-tufted hedge-row, and sparkling between
Dewy meadows enamelled in gold and in green,
With king-cups and daisies, that all the year please,
Sprays, petals and leaflets, that nod in the breeze,
With carpets, and garlands, and wreaths, deck the way,
And tempt the blithe spirit still onward to stray,
Itself its own home;—far away! far away!

The butterflies flutter in pairs round the bower;
The humble-bee sings in each bell of each flower;
The bee hums of heather and breeze-wooing hill,
And forgets in the sunshine his toil and his skill;
The birds carol gladly!—the lark mounts on high;
The swallows on wing make their tune to the eye,
And as birds of good omen, that summer loves well,
Ever wheeling weave ever some magical spell.

The hunt is abroad:—hark! the horn sounds its note,
And seems to invite us to regions remote.
The horse in the meadow is stirred by the sound,
And neighing impatient o'erleaps the low mound;
Then proud in his speed o'er the champaign he bounds,
To the whoop of the huntsman and tongue of the hounds
Then stay not within, for on such a blest day
We can never quit home, while with Nature we stray;
far away, far away!

CONSOLATION OF A MANIAC.

The feverous dream is past! and I awake,
Alone and joyless in my prison-cell,
Again to ply the never-ending toil,
And bid the task-worn memory weave again
The tangled threads, and ravell'd skein of thought,
Disjointed fragments of my care-worn life!
The mirror of my soul,—ah! when again
To welcome and reflect calm joy and hope!—
Again subsides, and smooths its turbid swell,
Late surging in the sweep of frenzy's blast,—
And the sad forms of scenes and deeds long past
Blend into spectral shapes and deathlike life,
And pass in silent, stern procession!—
The storm is past;—but in the pause and hush,
Nor calm nor tranquil joy, nor peace are mine;
My spirit is rebuk'd!—and like a mist,
Despondency in grey cold mantle clad,
In phantom form gigantic floats!—
That dream,
That dream, that dreadful dream, the potent spell,
That calls to life the phantoms of the past,—

Makes e'en oblivion memory's register,—
Still swells and vibrates in my throbbing brain!
Again I wildly quaff'd the maddening bowl,
Again I stak'd my all,—again the die
Prov'd traitor to my hopes;—and 'twas for her,
Whose love more madden'd than the bowl, whose love,
More dear than all, was treacherous as the die:—
Again I saw her with her paramour,
Again I aim'd the deadly blow, again
I senseless fell, and knew not whom I struck,
Myself, or her, or him:—I heard the shriek,
And mingled laugh, and cry of agony:
I felt the whirl of rapid motion,—
And hosts of fiendish shapes, uncertain seen
In murky air, glar'd fiercely as I pass'd;—
They welcom'd me with bitter laughs of scorn,
They pledged me in the brimming cup of hate.—
But stay your wild career, unbridled thoughts,
Or frenzy must unseat my reason's sway,—
Again give license to my lawless will!
And yet I know not, if that demon rout
Be fancy stirred by passion's power, or true;—
Or life itself be but a shadowy dream,
The act and working of an evil will!
Dread scope of fantasy and passion's power!
Oh God! take back the boon, the precious gift
Of will mysterious.—Give me, give again,
The infliction dire, full opiate of my griefs;
Sharp wound, but in the smart the panoply
And shield against temptations, that assail
My weak and yielding spirit!—Madness come!
The balm to guilt, the safeguard from remorse,
Make me forget, and save me from myself!

A CHARACTER.

A BIRD, who for his other sins
Had liv'd amongst the Jacobins;
Tho' like a kitten amid rats,
Or callow tit in nest of bats,
He much abhorr'd all democrats;
Yet nathless stood in ill report
Of wishing ill to Church and Court,
Tho' he'd nor claw, nor tooth, nor sting,
And learnt to pipe God save the King;
Tho' each day did new feathers bring,
All swore he had a leathern wing;
Nor polish'd wing, nor feather'd tail,
Nor down-clad thigh would aught avail;
And tho'—his tongue devoid of gall—
He civilly assur'd them all:—
"A bird am I of Phœbus' breed,
And on the sunflower cling and feed;
My name, good Sirs, is Thomas Tit!"
The bats would hail him brother cit,
Or, at the furthest, cousin-german.
At length the matter to determine,
He publicly denounced the vermin;
He spared the mouse, he prais'd the owl;
But bats were neither flesh nor fowl.
Blood-sucker, vampire, harpy, goul,
Came in full clatter from his throat,
Till his old nest-mates chang'd their note
To hireling, traitor, and turncoat,—

A base apostate who had sold
His very teeth and claws for gold;—
And then his feathers!—sharp the jest—
No doubt he feather'd well his nest!
A Tit indeed! aye, tit for tat—
With place and title, brother Bat,
We soon shall see how well he'll play
Count Goldfinch, or Sir Joseph Jay!
  Alas, poor Bird! and ill-bestarred—
Or rather let us say, poor Bard!
And henceforth quit the allegoric
  With metaphor and simile,
For simple facts and style historic:—
Alas, poor Bard! no gold had he;
Behind another's team he stept,
And plough'd and sow'd, while others reapt;
The work was his, but theirs the glory,
Sic vos non vobis, his whole story.
Besides, whate'er he wrote or said
Came from his heart as well as head;
And tho' he never left in lurch
His king, his country, or his church,
'Twas but to humour his own cynical
Contempt of doctrines Jacobinical;
To his own conscience only hearty,
'Twas but by chance he serv'd the party;—
The self-same things had said and writ,
Had Pitt been Fox, and Fox been Pitt;
Content his own applause to win
Would never dash thro' thick and thin,
And he can make, so say the wise,
No claim who makes no sacrifice;—
And bard still less:—what claim had he,

Who swore it vex'd his soul to see
So grand a cause, so proud a realm
With Goose and Goody at the helm;
Who long ago had fall'n asunder
But for their rivals, baser blunder,
The coward whine and Frenchified
Slaver and slang of the other side?—
  Thus, his own whim his only bribe,
Our bard pursued his old A. B. C.
Contented if he could subscribe
In fullest sense his name Ἔστησε;
('Tis Punic Greek, for 'he hath stood!')
Whate'er the men, the cause was good;
And therefore with a right good will,
Poor fool, he fights their battles still.
Tush! squeaked the Bats;—a mere bravado
To whitewash that base renegado;
'Tis plain unless you're blind or mad,
His conscience for the bays he barters;
And true it is—as true as sad—
These circlets of green baize he had—
But then, alas! they were his garters!
  Ah! silly Bard, unfed, untended,
His lamp but glimmer'd in its socket;
He liv'd unhonor'd and unfriended
With scarce a penny in his pocket;—
Nay—tho' he hid it from the many—
With scarce a pocket for his penny!

TRANSLATED FROM SCHILLER.*

I.

THE HOMERIC HEXAMETER DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED.

Strongly it bears us along in swelling and limitless billows,
Nothing before and nothing behind but the sky and the Ocean.

II.

THE OVIDIAN ELEGIAC METRE DESCRIBED AND EXEMPLIFIED.

In the hexameter rises the fountain's silvery column;
In the pentameter aye falling in melody back.

HUMILITY THE MOTHER OF CHARITY.

Frail creatures are we all! To be the best,
Is but the fewest faults to have:—
Look thou then to thyself, and leave the rest
To God, thy conscience, and the grave.

PROFUSE KINDNESS.

Νήπιοι, οὐκ ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ πάντος.—Hesiod.

What a spring-tide of Love to dear friends in a shoal!
Half of it to one were worth double the whole!

* See Note.

THE GARDEN OF BOCCACCIO.

Of late, in one of those most weary hours,
When life seems emptied of all genial powers,
A dreary mood, which he who ne'er has known
May bless his happy lot, I sate alone;
And, from the numbing spell to win relief,
Call'd on the past for thought of glee or grief.
In vain! bereft alike of grief and glee,
I sate and cow'r'd o'er my own vacancy!
And as I watch'd the dull continuous ache,
Which, all else slumb'ring, seem'd alone to wake;
O Friend! long wont to notice yet conceal,
And soothe by silence what words cannot heal,
I but half saw that quiet hand of thine
Place on my desk this exquisite design,
Boccaccio's Garden and its faery,
The love, the joyaunce, and the gallantry!
An Idyll, with Boccaccio's spirit warm,
Framed in the silent poesy of form.
Like flocks adown a newly-bathed steep
  Emerging from a mist; or like a stream
Of music soft that not dispels the sleep,
  But casts in happier moulds the slumberer's dream,
Gazed by an idle eye with silent might
The picture stole upon my inward sight.
A tremulous warmth crept gradual o'er my chest,
As though an infant's finger touch'd my breast.
And one by one (I know not whence) were brought
All spirits of power that most had stirr'd my thought
In selfless boyhood, on a new world tost
Of wonder, and in its own fancies lost;

Or charm'd my youth, that, kindled from above,
Loved ere it loved, and sought a form for love;
Or lent a lustre to the earnest scan
Of manhood, musing what and whence is man!
Wild strain of Scalds, that in the sea-worn caves
Rehearsed their war-spell to the winds and waves;
Or fateful hymn of those prophetic maids,
That call'd on Hertha in deep forest glades;
Or minstrel lay, that cheer'd the baron's feast;
Or rhyme of city pomp, of monk and priest,
Judge, mayor, and many a guild in long array,
To high-church pacing on the great saint's day.
And many a verse which to myself I sang,
That woke the tear yet stole away the pang,
Of hopes which in lamenting I renew'd.
And last, a matron now, of sober mien,
Yet radiant still and with no earthly sheen,
Whom as a faery child my childhood woo'd
Even in my dawn of thought—Philosophy;
Though then unconscious of herself, pardie,
She bore no other name than Poesy;
And, like a gift from heaven, in lifeful glee,
That had but newly left a mother's knee,
Prattled and play'd with bird and flower, and stone
As if with elfin playfellows well known,
And life reveal'd to innocence alone.
Thanks, gentle artist! now I can descry
Thy fair creation with a mastering eye,
And all awake! And now in fix'd gaze stand,
Now wander through the Eden of thy hand;
Praise the green arches, on the fountain clear
See fragment shadows of the crossing deer;
And with that serviceable nymph I stoop

The crystal from its restless pool to scoop.
I see no longer! I myself am there,
Sit on the ground-sward, and the banquet share.
'Tis I, that sweep that lute's love-echoing strings,
And gaze upon the maid who gazing sings:
Or pause and listen to the tinkling bells
From the high tower, and think that there she dwells.
With old Boccaccio's soul I stand possest,
And breathe an air like life, that swells my chest.

The brightness of the world, O thou once free,
And always fair, rare land of courtesy!
O Florence! with the Tuscan fields and hills,
And famous Arno, fed with all their rills;
Thou brightest star of star-bright Italy!
Rich, ornate, populous, all treasures thine,
The golden corn, the olive, and the vine.
Fair cities, gallant mansions, castles old
And forests, where beside his leafy hold
The sullen boar hath heard the distant horn,
And whets his tusks against the gnarled thorn;
Palladian palace with its storied halls;
Fountains, where Love lies listening to their falls;
Gardens, where flings the bridge its airy span,
And Nature makes her happy home with man;
Where many a gorgeous flower is duly fed
With its own rill, on its own spangled bed,
And wreathes the marble urn, or leans its head,
A mimic mourner, that with veil withdrawn
Weeps liquid gems, the presents of the dawn;—
Thine all delights, and every muse is thine;
And more than all, the embrace and intertwine
Of all with all in gay and twinkling dance!

'Mid gods of Greece and warriors of romance,
See! Boccace sits, unfolding on his knees
The new-found roll of old Mæonides; *
But from his mantle's fold, and near the heart,
Peers Ovid's holy book of Love's sweet smart! †

O all-enjoying and all blending sage,
Long be it mine to con thy mazy page,
Where, half-conceal'd, the eye of fancy views
Fauns, nymphs, and winged saints, all gracious to thy muse!
Still in thy garden let me watch their pranks,
And see in Dian's vest between the ranks
Of the trim vines, some maid that half believes
The vestal fires, of which her lover grieves,
With that sly satyr peeping through the leaves!

1829.

* Boccaccio claimed for himself the glory of having first introduced the works of Homer to his countrymen.

† I know few more striking or more interesting proofs of the overwhelming influence which the study of the Greek and Roman classics exercised on the judgments, feelings, and imaginations of the literati of Europe at the commencement of the restoration of literature, than the passage in the Filocopo of Boccaccio: where the sage instructor, Racheo, as soon as the young prince and the beautiful girl Biancofiore had learned their letters, sets them to study the Holy Book, Ovid's Heart of Love. "Incominciò Racheo a mettere il suo officio in esecuzione con intera sollecitudine. E loro, in breve tempo, insegnato a conoscer le lettere, fece leggere il santo libro d'Ovvidio, nel quale il sommo poeta mostra, come i santi fuochi di Venere si debbano ne' freddi cuori accendere."

CHARITY IN THOUGHT.

To praise men as good, and to take them for such,
  Is a grace, which no soul can mete out to a tittle;—
Of which he who has not a little too much,
  Will by Charity's gage surely have much too little.

ON BERKELEY AND FLORENCE COLERIDGE,

WHO DIED ON THE 16TH OF JANUARY, 1834.*

O FRAIL as sweet! twin buds, too rathe to bear
  The Winter's unkind air;
O gifts beyond all price, no sooner given
  Than straight required by Heaven;
Match'd jewels, vainly for a moment lent
  To deck my brow, or sent
Untainted from the earth, as Christ's, to soar,
  And add two spirits more
To that dread band seraphic, that doth lie
  Beneath the Almighty's eye;—
Glorious the thought—yet ah! my babes, ah! still
  A father's heart ye fill;
Though cold ye lie in earth—though gentle death
  Hath suck'd your balmy breath,
And the last kiss which your fair cheeks I gave
  Is buried in yon grave.
No tears—no tears—I wish them not again;
  To die for them was gain,
Ere Doubt, or Fear, or Woe, or act of Sin
  Had marr'd God's light within.

* By a Friend.

IMPROVED FROM STOLBERG.

ON A CATARACT FROM A CAVERN NEAR THE SUMMIT OF A MOUNTAIN PRECIPICE.

STROPHE.

Unperishing youth!
Thou leapest from forth
The cell of thy hidden nativity;
Never mortal saw
The cradle of the strong one;
Never mortal heard
The gathering of his voices;
The deep-murmured charm of the son of the rock,
That is lisp'd evermore at his slumberless fountain.
There's a cloud at the portal, a spray-woven veil
At the shrine of his ceaseless renewing;
It embosoms the roses of dawn,
It entangles the shafts of the noon,
And into the bed of its stillness
The moonshine sinks down as in slumber,
That the son of the rock, that the nursling of heaven
May be born in a holy twilight!

ANTISTROPHE.

The wild goat in awe
Looks up and beholds
Above thee the cliff inaccessible;—
Thou at once full-born
Madd'nest in thy joyance,
Whirlest, shatter'st, splitt'st,
Life invulnerable

LOVE'S APPARITION AND EVANISHMENT.

AN ALLEGORIC ROMANCE.

Like a lone Arab, old and blind
Some caravan had left behind
Who sits behind a ruin'd well,
Where the shy sand-asps bask and swell;
And now he hangs his aged head aslant,
And listens for a human sound—in vain!
And now the aid, which Heaven alone can grant,
Upturns his eyeless face from Heaven to gain;—
Even thus, in vacant mood, one sultry hour,
Resting my eye upon a drooping plant,
With brow low bent, within my garden bower,
I sate upon the couch of camomile;
And—whether 'twas a transient sleep, perchance,
Flitted across the idle brain, the while
I watched the sickly calm with aimless scope,
In my own heart; or that, indeed a trance,
Turn'd my eye inward—thee, O genial Hope,
Love's elder sister! thee did I behold,
Drest as a bridesmaid, but all pale and cold,
With roseless cheek, all pale and cold and dim
Lie lifeless at my feet!
And then came Love, a sylph in bridal trim,
And stood beside my seat;
She bent, and kiss'd her sister's lips,
As she was wont to do;—
Alas! 'twas but a chilling breath
Woke just enough of life in death
To make Hope die anew.

L'ENVOY.

In vain we supplicate the Powers above;
There is no resurrection for the Love
That, nurst in tenderest care, yet fades
In the chilled heart by gradual self-decay.

WHAT IS LIFE?

Resembles life what once was deemed of light,
Too ample in itself for human sight?
An absolute self—an element ungrounded—
All that we see, all colours of all shade
By encroach of darkness made?—
Is very life by consciousness unbounded?
And all the thoughts, pains, joys of mortal breath,
A war-embrace of wrestling life and death?

1829.

INSCRIPTION FOR A TIME-PIECE.

Now! it is gone.—Our brief hours travel post,
Each with its thought or deed, its Why or How:—
But know, each parting hour gives up a ghost
To dwell within thee—an eternal Now!

1830.

LOVE, HOPE, AND PATIENCE IN EDUCATION.

O'er wayward childhood would'st thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces;
Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy graces,
And in thine own heart let them first keep school.
For as old Atlas on his broad neck places
Heaven's starry globe, and there sustains it,—so
Do these upbear the little world below
Of Education,—Patience, Love, and Hope.
Methinks, I see them grouped, in seemly show,
The straightened arms upraised, the palms aslope,
And robes that, touching as adown they flow,
Distinctly blend, like snow embossed in snow.
O part them never! If Hope prostrate lie,
Love too will sink and die.
But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive
From her own life that Hope is yet alive;
And bending o'er with soul-transfusing eyes,
And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
Woos back the fleeting spirit and half-supplies;—
Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave to Love.
Yet haply there will come a weary day,
When overtasked at length
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
And both supporting does the work of both.

Beareth all things.—2 Cor. xiii., 7.

Gently I took that which ungently came,*
And without scorn forgave:—Do thou the same.
A wrong done to thee think a cat's eye spark
Thou wouldst not see, were not thine own heart dark.
Thine own keen sense of wrong that thirsts for sin,
Fear that—the spark self-kindled from within,
Which blown upon will blind thee with its glare,
Or smother'd stifle thee with noisome air.
Clap on the extinguisher, pull up the blinds,
And soon the ventilated spirit finds
Its natural daylight. If a foe have kenn'd,
Or worse than foe, an alienated friend,
A rib of dry rot in thy ship's stout side,
Think it God's message, and in humble pride
With heart of oak replace it;—thine the gains—
Give him the rotten timber for his pains!

—E cœlo descendit *γνῶθι σεαυτὸν*.—Juvenal.

Γνῶθι σεαυτὸν!—and is this the prime
And heaven-sprung adage of the olden time!—
Say, cans't thou make thyself?—Learn first that trade;—
Haply thou mayst know what thyself had made.
What hast thou, Man, that thou dar'st call thine own?—
What is there in thee, Man, that can be known?—
Dark fluxion, all unfixable by thought,
A phantom dim of past and future wrought,
Vain sister of the worm,—life, death, soul, clod—
Ignore thyself, and strive to know thy God!

* See Note.

ΕΠΙΤΑΦΙΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΓΡΑΠΤΟΝ.

Quæ linquam, aut nihil, aut nihili, aut vix sunt mea—sordes
Do morti;—reddo cætera, Christe! tibi.

TO THE YOUNG ARTIST, KAYSER OF KAYSERWERTH.

Kayser! to whom, as to a second self,
Nature, or Nature's next-of-kin, the Elf,
Hight Genius, hath dispensed the happy skill
To cheer or soothe the parting friends, alas!
Turning the blank scroll to a magic glass,
That makes the absent present at our will;
And to the shadowing of thy pencil gives
Such seeming substance, that it almost lives.

Well hast thou given the thoughtful Poet's face!
Yet hast thou on the tablet of his mind
A more delightful portrait left behind—
Ev'n thy own youthful beauty, and artless grace,
Thy natural gladness and eyes bright with glee!
Kayser farewell!
Be wise! be happy! and forget not me.

1883.

MY BAPTISMAL BIRTH-DAY.

God's child in Christ adopted,—Christ my all,—
What that earth boasts were not lost cheaply, rather
Than forfeit that blest name, by which I call
The Holy One, the Almighty God, my Father?—
Father! in Christ we live, and Christ in Thee—
Eternal Thou, and everlasting we.
The heir of heaven, henceforth I fear not death:
In Christ I live! in Christ I draw the breath
Of the true life!—Let then earth, sea, and sky
Make war against me! On my front I show
Their mighty master's seal. In vain they try
To end my life, that can but end its woe.—
Is that a death-bed where a Christian lies?—
Yes! but not his—'tis Death itself there dies.

EPITAPH.

Stop, Christian Passer-by!—Stop, child of God,
And read with gentle breast. Beneath this sod
A poet lies, or that which once seem'd he.—
O, lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C.;
That he who many a year with toil of breath
Found death in life, may here find life in death!
Mercy for praise—to be forgiven for fame
He ask'd, and hoped, through Christ. Do thou the same!

9th November, 1833.

NOTES.

PAGE 3.—FIRST ADVENT OF LOVE.

THE early date assigned to these exquisite lines is derived from a memorandum of the author. "Relics of my School-boy Muse; i. e. fragments of poems composed before my fifteenth year.

LOVE'S FIRST HOPE—

'O fair is Love's first hope,' &c.

The concluding stanza of an Elegy on a Lady, who died in early youth:—

O'er the raised earth the gales of evening sigh;
And see, a Daisy peeps upon its slope!
I wipe the dimming waters from mine eye;
Even on the cold Grave lights the Cherub Hope!

AGE.—A stanza written forty years later than the preceding:—

Dew-drops are the Gems of Morning,
But the tears of dewy Eve!
Where no Hope is, Life's a warning,
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old.

S. T. C., *Sept.*, 1827."

GENEVIEVE.

"This little poem was written when the author was a boy." Note to the edition of 1796.

The Raven and Time, real and imaginary, are mentioned as "School-boy Poems" in the Preface to the "Sibylline Leaves," published in 1817.

Page 13.—KISSES.

This "Effusion" and "The Rose" were originally addressed to a Miss F. Nesbitt, at Plymouth, whither the author accompanied his eldest brother, to whom he was paying a visit, when he was twenty-one years of age. Both poems are written in pencil on the blank pages of a copy of Langhorne's Collins. "Kisses" is entitled "Cupid turned Chymist;" is signed S. T. Coleridge, and dated Friday evening, 1793.

"The Rose" has this heading:—"On presenting a Moss Rose to Miss F. Nesbitt." In both poems the name of Nesbitt appears instead of Sara, afterwards substituted.

"Kisses" has this note in the edition of 1796:—

"Effinxit quondam blandum meditata laborem,
Basia lascivâ Cypria Diva manu.
Ambrosiæ succos occultâ temperat arte,
Fragransque infuso nectare tingit opus.
Sufficit et partem mellis, quod subdolus olim
Non impune favis surripuisset Amor.
Decussos violæ foliis admiscet odores,
Et spolia æstivis plurima rapta rosis:
Addit et illecebras, et mille et mille lepores
Et quot Acidalius gaudia Cestus habet.
Ex his composuit Dea basia; et omnia libans
Invenias nitidæ sparsa per ora Cloes."

Carm. Quad., vol. ii.

Page 17.—LINES ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING.

In the edition of 1796, this poem is stated to have been written in *early* youth; and in a note to the line "O (have I sighed) were mine the wizard's rod," the author "entreats the Public's

pardon for having carelessly suffered to be printed such intolerable stuff as this and the thirteen following lines;" adding, "that they have not even the merit of originality, as every thought is to be found in the Greek epigrams." In the edition brought out the following year, the whole poem was first omitted, but eventually "reprieved" and printed in an Appendix, at the request of some intelligent friends, who observed, that "what most delighted the author when he was young in *writing* would probably best please those who are young in *reading* poetry," and that "a man must learn to be *pleased* with a subject before he can yield that attention to it which is necessary in order to acquire a just taste." In the edition of 1803 the poem appears in its proper place, without any remark. Few readers will have regretted that this bright and popular strain was thus rescued from the hasty condemnation of its youthful author. In the note, the author repels an imputation of plagiarism from Mr. Rogers's "Pleasures of Memory," and brings a similar charge against his distinguished cotemporary. He finds the original of the tale of "Florio," "in 'Lochleven,' a poem of great merit by Michael Bruce." This assertion he afterwards withdrew, apologizing (in the Appendix above referred to) for his rashness, in very handsome terms. This occurred fifty-six years ago. Mr. Rogers still lives to wear his unwithering laurels. He has seen two generations of his poetic brethren pass away,—*μετὰ δὲ τριτάτοισιν ἀνάσσει.*

The following note, in the edition of 1796, may be cited as a proof how early, and how decidedly, the genius of Wordsworth was detected and proclaimed by Coleridge:—"The expression, 'green radiance,'" he says, (referring to the "Lines Written at Shurton Bars," p. 54 of the present edition,) "is borrowed from Mr. Wordsworth, a poet whose versification is occasionally harsh, and his diction too frequently obscure," (the "Descriptive Sketches," and "Evening Walk," published 1793, since republished, with numerous corrections, as juvenile pieces, were the poems thus characterised); "but whom I deem unrivalled among the writers of the present day in manly sentiment, novel imagery, and vivid colouring."

D. C.

Page 34.—MONODY ON THE DEATH OF CHATTERTON.

This monody was sketched at Christ's Hospital; but meagre indeed is the boyish *schema*, with scarce any of the fire and felicity of the finished composition. October, 1794, is the date affiixed by the author. It appears from a passage in one of Mr. Southey's letters, that seven lines and a half, toward the end of the poem, were borrowed from a young friend and fellow-poet.

"Every thing is in the fairest trim. Favell and Le Grice" (a younger brother of Charles Lamb's Valentine Le Grice), "two young Pantisocrats of nineteen, join us. They possess great genius. You may perhaps like the sonnet on the subject of our emigration, by Favell:—

"*No more my visionary soul shall dwell*
On joys that were: no more endure to weigh
The shame and anguish of the evil day,
Wisely forgetful! O'er the ocean swell
Sublime of Hope, I seek the cottayed dell,
Where Virtue calm with careless step may stray,
And dancing to the moonlight roundelay,
The wizard Passion wears (sic) a *holy spell.*
Eyes that have ached with anguish! ye shall weep
Tears of doubt-mingled joy, as those who start
From precipices of distempered sleep,
On which the fierce-eyed fiends their revels keep,
And see the rising sun, and find it dart
New rays of pleasure trembling to the heart."

Southey's Life and Correspondence, vol. i., p. 224.

At the end of the Preface to the edition of 1796, Mr. Coleridge acknowledges himself indebted to Mr. Favell for the "rough sketch" of Effusion XVI.,—

"Sweet Mercy! how my weary heart has bled;"

and to the author of "Joan of Arc" for the first half of Effusion XV.,—

"Pale Roamer through the night," &c.

It is remarkable that when these obligations were particularised, the passage borrowed from the Monody should not have been referred to its author. But this is but one of a thousand instances that could be given of Mr. Coleridge's partial and uncertain (though in some respects powerful) memory. In 1803 he published, without signature, among his own productions, Mr. Lamb's Sonnet to Mrs. Siddons, which had appeared in the edition of 1796, signed C. L., and in 1797 in Lamb's portion of the joint volume.

Page 41.—SONNET III.

This Sonnet, and the ninth, to "Stanhope," were among the pieces withdrawn from the second edition of 1797. They reappeared in the edition of 1803, and were again withdrawn in 1828, solely, it may be presumed, on account of their political vehemence. They will excite no angry feelings, and lead to no misapprehensions now; and as they are fully equal to their companions in poetical merit, the Editors have not scrupled to reproduce them. These Sonnets were originally entitled "Effusions."

Page 93.—THE RIME OF THE ANCIENT MARINER.

The following interesting notices concerning "The Ancient Mariner" are contained in a letter of the Rev. Alexander Dyce, the well-known admirable Editor of old Plays, to the late H. N. Coleridge:—

"When my truly honored friend Mr. Wordsworth was last in London, soon after the appearance of De Quincy's papers in 'Tate's Magazine,' he dined with me in Gray's Inn, and made the following statement, which, I am quite sure, I give you correctly: '"The Ancient Mariner" was founded on a strange dream, which a friend of Coleridge had, who fancied he saw a skeleton ship, with figures in it. We had both determined to write some poetry for a monthly magazine, the profits of which were to defray the expenses of a little excursion we were to make together. "The Ancient Mariner" was intended for this

periodical, but was too long. I had very little share in the composition of it, for I soon found that the style of Coleridge and myself would not assimilate. Besides the lines (in the fourth part),

> "And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
> As is the ribbed sea-sand,"

I wrote the stanza (in the first part),

> "He holds him with his glittering eye—
> The Wedding-Guest stood still,
> And listens like a three-years' child:
> The Mariner hath his will,"

and four or five lines more in different parts of the poem, which I could not now point out. The idea of "*shooting an albatross*" *was mine; for I had been reading Shelvocke's Voyages, which probably Coleridge never saw.* I also suggested the reanimation of the dead bodies, to work the ship.'" See also "Memoirs of William Wordsworth," by Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, vol. i., chap. xi., p. 107—8.

Page 221.—THE DAY-DREAM.

This little poem first appeared in the "Morning Post," in 1802, but was doubtless composed in Germany. It seems to have been forgotten by its author, for this was the only occasion on which it saw the light through him. The Editors think that it will plead against parental neglect in the mind of most readers.

Page 301.—MELANCHOLY.

First published in the "Morning Chronicle," 1794. The original conclusion, which appears in the edition of 1817, was as follows:—

> . . . . "that filled her soul,
> Nor did not whispering spirits roll
> A mystic tumult, and a fateful chime
> Mixt with wild shapings of the unborn time."

PAGE 301.—COMPOSED IN SICKNESS AND IN ABSENCE.

This little poem, which first appeared under the above title in the "Watchman," was written in half-mockery of Darwin's style, with its *dulcia vitia*, but was so seriously admired by some of the Author's friends that he admitted it into the Appendix of his joint publication with Lloyd and Lamb, and afterwards into the edition of 1803. It was withdrawn from the edition of 1828, but re-admitted by his last Editor under the sportive title of "Darwiniana."

PAGE 313.—THE PAINS OF SLEEP.

This poem was first published with the "Kubla Khan," in 1816, with the following notice:—"As a contrast to this vision I have annexed a fragment of a very different character, describing with equal fidelity the dream of pain and disease." It has been recently ascertained to have been written in 1803.

PAGE 315.—A HYMN.

The manuscript of this poem, which is now printed for the first time, was communicated to the Editors by J. W. Wilkins, Esq., of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, with the following memorandum:—

"The accompanying autograph, dated 1814, and addressed to Mrs. Hood, of Brunswick-square, was given not later than the year 1817, to a relative of my own, who was then residing at Clifton (and was, at the time at which it passed into his hands, an attendant on Mr. Coleridge's lectures, which were in course of delivery at that place), either by the lady to whom it is addressed, or by some other friend of Mr. Coleridge. It was subsequently placed among other papers, and its existence was partially forgotten, until last year, when it finally passed into my hands.

"J. W. WILKINS."

PAGE 317.—SEPARATION.

The fourth and last stanzas are from Cotton's Chlorinda, with very slight alteration.

Page 313.—ON TAKING LEAVE OF ——, 1817.

"To Mary Morgan and Charlotte Brent. Nov., 1817, St. James's Square, Bristol."—S. T. C.

Page 321.—YOUTH AND AGE.

There has been more difficulty in the chronological arrangement of this last section than in either of the preceding. It has been found impossible to ascertain the date of "Alice du Clos," and of some of the others; but it was thought best to include them in the last division, as they were so placed in the edition of 1834. As a whole, they possess a distinct character which certainly belongs to the Poet's "later life." With respect to the date of the admired composition "Youth and Age," memories and opinions differ. It is the impression of the writer of this note that the first stanza, from "Verse, a breeze," to "liv'd in't together," was produced as late as 1824, and that it was subsequently prefixed to the second stanza, "Flowers are lovely," which is said to have been composed many years before. It appears, from the Author's own statement, already quoted, that the last verse was not added till 1827, to which period the poem, considered as a whole, may very well be assigned.

Page 366.—TRANSLATED FROM SCHILLER.

The originals of Count Stolberg's poem, of which the lines on a Cataract are an expansion, of Schiller's Homeric and Ovidian couplets, of Mathisson's Hendecasyllables, freely translated in the same metre, page 281, and of the poem of Frederica Brunn, which is supposed to have suggested the Hymn in the Vale of Chamouni, are here given as follows:—

Unsterblicher Jüngling!
Der strömest hervor
Aus der Felsenkluft.
Kein sterblicher sah

Die Wiege des Starken;
Es hörte kein Ohr
Das Lallen des Edlen im sprudelnden Quell.

Dich kleidet die Sonne
In Strahlen des Ruhmes!
Sie mahlet mit Farben des himmlischen Bogens
Die schwebenden Wolken der staübenden Fluth.

DER EPISCHE HEXAMETER.

Schwindelnd trägt er dich fort auf rastlos strömenden Wogen;
Hinter dir siehst du, du siehst vor dir nur Himmel und Meer.

DAS DISTICHON.

Im Hexameter steigt des Spring-quells flüssige Saüle;
Im Pentameter drauf fällt sie melodisch herab.

MILESISCHES MAHRCHEN.

Ein milesisches Mährchen, Adonide!
Unter heiligen Lorbeerwipfeln glänzte
Hoch auf rauschendem Vorgebirg ein Tempel.
Aus den Fluthen erhub, von Pan gesegnet,
Im Gedüfte der Ferne sich ein Eiland.
Oft, in mondlicher Dämmrung, schwebt' ein Nachen,
Vom Gestade des heerdenreichen Eilands,
Zur umwaldeten Bucht, wo sich ein Steinpfad
Zwischen Mirten zum Tempelhain emporwand.
Dort im Rosengebüsch, der Huldgöttinnen
Marmorgruppe geheiligt, fleht' aft einsam
Eine Priesterinn, reizend wie Apelles
Seine Grazien mahlt, zum Sohn Cytherens,
Ihren Kallias freundlich zu umschweben
Und durch Wogel und Dunkel ihn zu leiten,

Bis der nächtliche Schiffer, wonneschauernd,
An den Busen ihr sank.

Aus tiefem Schatten des schweigenden Tannenhains
Erblick' ich behend dich, Scheitel der Ewigkeit,
Blendender Gipfel, von dessen Höhe
Ahndend mein Geist ins unendliche schwebet!

Wer senkte den Pfeiler tief in der Erde Schooss,
Der, seit Jahrtausenden, fest deine Masse stützt?
Wer thürmte hoch in des Aethers Wölbung
Mächtig und kühn dein umstrahltes Antlitz?

Wer goss Euch hoch aus der ewigen Winter's Reich,
O Zackenströme, mit Donnergetös herab?
Und wer gebietet laut mit der Allmacht Stimme;
"Hier sollen ruhen die starrenden Wogen!"

Wer zeichnet dort dem Morgensterne die Bahn?
Wer kränzt mit Blüthen des ewigen Frostes Saum?
Wem tönt in schrecklichen Harmonieen,
Wilder Arveiron dein Wogentümmel?

Jehovah! Jehovah! kracht's im berstenden Eis;
Lavinendonner rollen's die Kluft hinab:
Jehovah rauscht's in den hellen Wipfeln,
Flüstert's an reiselnden Silberbächen.

PAGE 376.

"*Gently I took that which ungently came.*"

Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar. February 3rd, Stanza 30.

THE END.

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